STATE T... LIBRARY

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. 103, NO. 27 NEW YORK, MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1940 NUMBER 1361

For the New Year

It is as hard to say Happy New Year as it was to say Merry Christmas. But there is a sturdy delight in mere looking forward, no matter how bleak the prospect. Those who made the outlook dreary are precisely those who first lived in the past, then turned to laments for it. Nobody owns the future except those who make it. Let us say our happy new years, and say them not with a nod to the goddess of luck, but with a stern light of determination in our eyes. The year 1940 has ended much better than most of us had a right to expect, and it has done so because of those who kept their courage in its darkest days.

The War Here

Day by day the news tells of the progress of the war in Africa, in Albania, in bombing over Britain and bombing over the Continent. Hitler's and Mussolini's spokesmen have done us the service of reminding us, however, that the real issue is now being decided in the United States. They chide us for aiding Britain; they warn us that what we are doing is not being overlooked, and that if we keep on they may have to regard us as a belligerent. It is plain enough that they are more disturbed by the plan to increase our aid than by anything else that is going on in the world. Their eyes—like Mr. Churchill's—are on the battles of Washington, Detroit, Chicago, Pittsburgh. It is here that the fortunes of war are now in the balance. Our radio correspondents ought to be reporting day by day and hour by hour whether Hitler is pushing us back in our factories or whether we are making headway against him. Every rivet hammered and seam welded will help to decide the future of the world. The more the dictators warn us, the greater effort we must make.

Good News About War Materials

President Roosevelt said not long ago that the United States is now doing as much for England as is possible at the present moment. But is this really true? We know that the army and navy have given the larger American manufacturing firms about as many orders as they can handle. But we know also that many smaller firms, which could work on a subcontracting basis, turning out not an entire machine but separate parts, are not being utilized. There are scores of cities and towns where small factories are working on civilian goods that could well be spared, or are not working at all.

A careful study of this unused capacity has just been made in Washington in connection with the effort of Morris L. Cooke to revive the ghost towns, mentioned in our issue of December 16. As a result, the astonishing fact seems to be confirmed that we are now using only about one-half our immediate industrial capacity, even when we figure on a basis of one daily shift plus a reasonable amount of overtime. This is sensationally good news. The most surprising thing about it is that the army and navy waited so long to find out these vital facts. Great Britain went through the same experience many months ago. Today, she is using subcontracting wherever possible; in her airplane industry, for example, this system has trebled employment in less than twelve months. It may yet prove that the answer to Hitler is to be found just here.

CONTENTS

The Week 883

Editorials

The Halifax Blunder 886
Nazi Innocents 886
The CIO Plan for Defense 887

General Articles

Britain Can Pay . . . . . George Soule 889
Automobiles of 1941 . . . . D. H. Palmer 891
Whose Insurance Companies? . Stephen Carter 894
Who Won the Election? . . George Britt 895
Murray: CIO's New Boss . Jonathan Mitchell 896
Defense and the Slave-Men . . Max Lerner 897
Washington Notes . . . . . T. R. B. 899
The Old-Fashioned Way . . Otis Ferguson 900
The Bandwagon 901

Correspondence 901

Books in Review

A Pro-Tory Tract . . . . Max Gissen 904
Seasonal, Very Simple (verse) . Rolfe Humphries 905
If We Had Some Eggs . . Harry Levin 905
Portrait of Dylan Thomas . . F. W. Dupee 906
European History: Books of the Year . . . . . Gaudens Megaro 907

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1940, IN THE U.S.A. BY EDITORIAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 40 EAST 49TH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y. ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879

PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Super-Commission for Defense

The President has finally acted to reshuffle the defense administration and create a super-commission. Its four members are Mr. Knudsen, Mr. Hillman, Mr. Stimson and Mr. Knox. In doing so he has relieved, at least for a time, the pressure on him from all directions arising from dissatisfaction with the lagging defense effort. Yet the public reaction to the move is still puzzled and tentative. And rightly so. For people do not yet know to what extent the change is only a paper change, and (if it is real) to what extent it has affected the relative positions of management and labor. There are three criteria for an effective defense set-up: that it should have power, that it should represent adequately the various groups that have a stake in the defense effort, and, finally, that it should have a vigorous personnel.

On the score of power, which the NDAC has thus far sadly lacked, one forward step at least has been taken. That is the inclusion of the army and navy within the commission, and vice versa. This has the merit of ending the situation where they seemed to be foreign powers communicating with each other by ambassadors. It has also the greater merit of bringing into the commission the army and navy heads who, because they control the purchasing power for defense, control the actual power. We could wish the question of legal power further clarified. But there can be no doubt that the situation has improved.

What About Labor?

On the question of labor's place in the new set-up, it is fortunate for all concerned that in the final plans Mr. Hillman was included. Judging from reports, the President's first intention seems to have been to have a three-man super-commission. If this is true, it were a grievous truth, to be explained only by the persistent campaign of press and industry to get the idea across that where "defense" is concerned, "reform" must be scrapped. Actually nothing could be falser than this idea. Without the maintenance of labor's rights and labor morale, "defense" in a war of factories becomes impossible except under an outright dictatorship. With Mr. Hillman's inclusion, what might have been a great blunder has been averted. We still have our fingers crossed, however. It may be a straw in the wind that Alsop and Kintner report in their Washington column that Knudsen rather than Hillman is the man for Stimson and Knox; and that in any showdown, business can count on a three-to-one vote. The people will await developments. And they will be especially anxious to see what quality Mr. Knudsen, the new chief, shows. He has had a good press. What remains is to see whether he has the strength to keep his fellow industrialists in line, the ability to keep a complex administrative machine going, the imagination to release his mind from the stereotypes of business. Both he and the President have a great opportunity.

Lending Arms

President Roosevelt's plan to lend arms to Britain has not, contrary to the fears of many, aroused much opposition from isolationists. On the whole, its object seems to be approved. This is an example showing how ready the country is to respond to bold and intelligent leadership. The main criticism seems to be from those who want to reach the same end in a different way. There is still a good deal of agitation for repeal of the Johnson Act so that the bankers may float British loans. This seems to us the worst possible expedient. It is dishonest in that nobody really expects loans of money to be repaid. It is damaging in that it would give private interests a cut in a nonexistent profit, and would transfer to their hands power and influence that should reside in a democratic government. Let us for once be imaginative enough to do an economic job directly instead of through a transparent monetary fraud.

Sabotage Prevented

One attempt at sabotage was broken up last week, and that neither by Mr. Dies nor the FBI, but by the President. We refer to his veto of the Logan-Walter bill, which—had it become law—would have done more to obstruct defense and morale than a whole corps of fifth-columnists. The bill would have multiplied red-tape procedure indefinitely within every administrative agency and given any corporation with clever lawyers and with money to burn the whip-hand over the government. And it would have given the courts enlarged power to review administrative decisions not only on questions of law (which they have now) but on questions of fact as well. Thus the whole purpose for which the agencies have been created, which was to get expert ability instead of judicial ominiscience in the task of controlling business, would have been frustrated. The President's veto message should go down as one of his best state papers. It is sharp in its analysis, forthright in its language, and carries with it a sting of rebuke. The President is right when he says that the bill "is one of the repeated efforts by a combination of lawyers . . . and interests which desire to escape regulation." But after repulsing this group from the back door by his veto, the President must not make the mistake of admitting them to the front door as dollar-a-year men.

Mr. Scanlan Scores a Point

A correspondent passes on to us a choice remark of Patrick Scanlan, writing in The (Catholic) Tablet, of Brooklyn, a paper that has shown great tenderness toward Father Coughlin and his ideas. Said Mr. Scanlan, in discussing "anti-Christian propaganda":

It would be possible to give a dozen similar examples,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all the way down to The New Republic's contemptible remark of August 26, when, referring to "anti-Americanism," it spoke of "others, like Christians and Deatherage" —but it would be unnecessary.

Mr. Scanlan evidently thought that the word "Christians" referred to the followers of Christ. Hard as it is to believe, he seems never to have heard of George W. Christians, the notorious American fascist. That any human being would seriously interpret our sentence as Mr. Scanlan did is hard to believe; but he did it, and he is human.

The Deadly Fifth Column

We hear that government agencies in Washington are being bombarded with letters signed by Chief J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI. One, to Mr. J. Warren Madden, former chairman of the National Labor Relations Board (labeled "Personal and Confidential"), has appeared in the records of the Smith Committee investigating the Labor Board. It is dated November 14, 1940, and runs as follows:

> I wish to advise you information has been received by this Bureau to the effect that Grant Cannon, a Field Examiner connected with the National Labor Relations Board at St. Louis, Missouri, is known to have radical tendencies leaning toward communism.
>
> It is further reported that Cannon has studied Anthropology and has been affiliated with the National Labor Relations Board for three years.
>
> It was also reported that Cannon visited Mexico City, Mexico, to observe the presidential election in that country in July, 1940.
>
> The above information is submitted for your consideration and whatever action you deem appropriate.

We suppose this letter was written by a subordinate, but we hope Mr. Hoover can do something to stop the circulation of such vague accusations. In view of the fact that many prominent persons, from the President and Mrs. Roosevelt down, have been charged with "radical tendencies leaning toward communism," the assertion in this regard is hardly to be taken seriously without more evidence. What does disturb us, however, is the report that Mr. Cannon has studied anthropology and has visited Mexico City.

Tale of the Jazz Age

Nobody else wrote about the American aristocracy of the post-war years as did Scott Fitzgerald. Nobody else could make it seem glamorous while retaining his integrity as a literary craftsman and his clear-sightedness as an observer. The heroes of his early novels and short stories were boys who had gone to the right prep schools and made the right eating clubs at Princeton. The heroines were girls who had won their moral freedom in the excitement of wartime, who had learned to smoke and neck and take nips out of pocket flasks, with a general air of glitter and defiance. When they married the heroes, both were launched into that post-war metropolitan world where it was so easy to make money. Fitzgerald himself, about the time that he published his "Tales of the Jazz Age," was telling the readers of The Saturday Evening Post how to live on $50,000 a year. He was earning almost as much by his writing.

All that seems a very long time ago. In the years after 1927, something happened to these people that Fitzgerald found hard to understand. They lost their glamor; they grew soft and middle-aged; they began quarreling among themselves and drinking too much. He tried to tell that story too, in his last novel, "Tender Is the Night," and he wrote with even more than his usual care. But he did not succeed in organizing his material, or in clearly stating his attitude toward it, and the book that he had taken nine years to finish was not even a nine days' success. Shortly afterwards he retired to the well paid anonymity of Hollywood. His death there, for anyone who was young in the 1920's, is like the death of one's own youth. It is like a stone placed over the grave of all the flappers and smoothies, all the glitter and foolishness and wild good humor.

News Notes of a Week

Marshal Graziani announced frankly that his army in Egypt had been defeated by the coördinated power of the British forces (on land, sea and in the air) and by lack of Italian mechanized equipment. He denied that his forces had been surprised. . . . British reinforcements steadily closed in on Bardia while advance forces pushed on into Libya. . . . Athens reported having trapped three Italian divisions, about 45,000 men, in the central Albanian mountains. . . . Reports from Belgrade indicated that upward of 50,000 German soldiers were concentrated at Bari and Naples. German transport planes were reported flying them into Albania. . . . The RAF's heavy bombings of Mannheim, in southwestern Germany, were thought to be directed against movements of men and material into Italy. . . . Travelers returning from Italy believed the German influx was political rather than military and was directed more against the Italian people than the Greeks.

A widespread housing shortage in major defense centers of the United States was reported by The New York Times. . . . New York City saved more than $32,000,000 this year in relief payments to the unemployed and needy. . . . Six men were killed in the crash of an army bomber in the California mountains. . . . Alfred M. Landon announced that "reliable official sources" in Washington predicted an invasion of England in February. . . . William Allen White declared that keeping America out of war was his committee's sole aim.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Halifax Blunder

THE KINDEST COMMENT that could be made on the appointment of Lord Halifax as Britain's Ambassador to the United States would be to say that it is a hideous mistake. It may be much worse. It may be a signal, a wink, to certain agitated old ladies of Wall Street and their journalistic confessors not to take Ernest Bevin too seriously. Did not the Minister of Labor a few weeks ago, strenuously declare that labor and the common people generally must be given a place in the British diplomatic service as well as in other departments of government? A whole section of American appeasement is built on the fear that labor is gaining "too much power" in England; Mr. Kennedy's famous Boston interview was largely concerned with this hand-made nightmare.

The appointment of Lord Halifax will reassure the American appeasement circle. What reassures them will disturb the mass of Americans who must do the work and pay the taxes on which our policy of help to England rests. They will do so willingly to serve democracy; it is an affront for the voice of that democracy to be one of the chief appeasers, the father of the Runciman mission to Czecho-Slovakia, the opponent of strong English-French alliance in the years before the war; the author of a smug introduction to Lord Lloyd's wicked book, "The British Case," which, two months after the war began, impudently praised Benito Mussolini's concept of government.

We are not yet prepared to believe that the Halifax appointment represents a crystallization of British policy in the wrong direction. It may be only another sign that British policy is still in a state of transition, from the crusted horrors of the last few years, to something fit to express the hopes of decent men for a fair and free world. But one of those crusted horrors, Captain Margesson, the Conservative whip, who has indiscriminately given his all to every marplot who has managed to wangle the premiership, is the new War Secretary; a party hack leads, at least nominally, the effort on which the hopes of mankind rest. Some of that dullness and edgelessness which marked the "bilge-water" days of Conservative rule seems to have returned.

We are for England, but are compelled to be remorselessly candid because the world is not playing at a game; it is inventing its future. We hope our candor will be of assistance to those in England who are also fighting for the right kind of future. We are impressed, to a certain extent, by the ingenious argument that the "inner council" of appeasement has now been scattered; Halifax to Washington, Hoare to Madrid, Lord Simon to the judiciary apparatus. Eden, once replaced by Halifax as Foreign Secretary, now replaces him; and Viscount Cranborne dons a peerage to carry his hatred of Hitlerism into the House of Lords. It is also hinted that Sir Gerald Campbell, the able former British Consul General in New York City, will go to Washington as a Minister with Halifax, and this is good. But we still hold that America deserves to be something more than a pocket in which to store old appeasers; many Americans want to know what kind of war this is; the answer now given them is a poor one. Halifax will be watched. It is a high democratic duty to place upon him the burden of proving himself.

Nazi Innocents

IN THE DAYS before the Stalin-Hitler pact the so-called "innocent" played an important part in Communist strategy. He or she was an idealistic person, prominent in society or the arts (including burlesque), who had accepted ready-made ideas about Soviet Russia and recognized only its utopian characteristics. These individuals were of much greater use to the party than avowed Communists, because they penetrated into the highest reaches of our social life, areas that were normally closed to forthright propaganda.

What attracted the innocents, and encouraged them, was the doctrine of inevitability which the Marxists through almost a century of effort had succeeded in putting over. They believed the revolution was bound to come and were persuaded that the Communists, whatever their shortcomings, would emerge as the dominant group. So they argued that they might as well join up early, and perhaps history would reward them with the crown of prophet or saint. But above all, they felt it was the safe course to pursue, though many persuaded themselves that they were assuming the risks the social revolutionary had run a generation or so earlier.

Hard on the heels of the departing innocents of Stalinism have appeared innocents of another type: these are the highly placed, well intentioned persons who, having accepted ready-made ideas about the Germans, believe in the inevitability of Nazi success. Herr Hitler, competently assisted by his own propaganda department, and those independently organized elsewhere in his name, has usurped the place created by the Marxists, and formerly occupied by the Communists. It is now his movement that is heralded by the prophets as inevitable and one that will remake the world.

Leaders of the varied hosts of Nazi-innocents are, as everyone knows, Colonel Lindbergh and his wife, the gifted Anne Morrow Lindbergh. Her most recent book, "The Wave of the Future," has been almost everywhere read and accepted with no thought that it might be a highly dangerous political document. It was a charming book by a charming writer and it con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tinues, after weeks and months, to hold its place at the top of the best-seller lists of the country.

Actually, "The Wave of the Future" is one of the most reactionary and pernicious pieces of writing that have appeared since Hitler rose to power. Accepting the inevitability of Nazi victory, Mrs. Lindbergh transforms the doctrine of isolationism into a kind of dream, compounded of elements of our past which, however inadequately, correspond to Hitler's vision of the Wagnerian Saga. Her interpretation of our peculiar and precious culture is very like, in its imagery and unreality, the Hitlerian dream of Nordic unity and the return of Germany to her traditional past. "The purity of our white church steeples" (have you seen the square brick Baptist churches of the Mississippi Valley?). "Our peculiarly American crisp blue October weather" (have you ever gone to a football game in October in Los Angeles?). The America of Anne Morrow Lindbergh's dream is one which did not even exist in pre-revolutionary New England, though this is the America that most closely resembles the Anglo-Saxon, Congregationalist picture she presents as the realm which we shall inhabit in the future. We shall inhabit it, that is, if we have the wisdom to build a Chinese wall around our peculiarly American culture and keep it safe from all intruders.

How far from reality, how utterly reactionary this view is, can best be illustrated by setting against it another picture of America's future. Not long ago, Secretary Ickes, at a public dinner in New York, made a speech that deserves to be remembered. The dinner was for the purpose of raising money for refugees, and the Secretary spoke of the part refugees had played in the creation of our America from earliest times. In the course of his address, and to illustrate a point, he said that if you asked five men in the street who Tschaikovsky was, four of them would say that he was a candidate for tackle on the All-American football team. This showed, the Secretary said, that while Tschaikovsky, because of the sound of his name, could not be elected President, his son very well might be.

There remains some of the "white church spire" (if that means Adams, Lowell, or even Jones) in the line-up of our college football teams and the line-up at the factory gates. And the line-up before the polling booths. But the names are changing fast. The numerous descendants of the great tide of immigration with which industrial America was built are now entering the national blood stream. Any view of our future which looks backward to the "purity" of Colonial culture is reactionary and essentially vicious. Any view based upon a specious assumption of inevitability is dangerous and misleading. Before us lies the unparalleled opportunity of realizing upon the vast reservoirs of creative human effort which lie beneath the surface of our great conglomerate and continental population. All races are mingled, and through them America can merge its effort with the struggling and despairing nationalities of other continents to help restore order and permanent good will.

The CIO Plan for Defense

THE PLAN for reorganization of the defense program offered by Philip Murray, president of the CIO, does not ask for something for labor, but rather tells the country what it must do in order to speed the defense effort. Tentative as it is, its main points are sound.

The basic conception is that each industry should be organized as a unit for purposes of distributing orders, scheduling production and expanding facilities. Only those unfamiliar with the details of industrial practice can be ignorant of the possible gains from unitary administration of this kind. One plant is likely to have more orders than it can fill, another to have excess capacity. In one season workers are laid off and machines are idle because market demand declines; in another even overtime work cannot catch up with orders. These wastes are due primarily to the exigencies of competition and the scattered authority of the several units. To plan production for the industry as a whole would permit much greater output.

Why, for instance, would it not be possible in the steel industry to utilize the normally slack periods for greater arms production, and to make more of the steel necessary for arms when civilian demand is slack? Why would it not be desirable to use idle plants for some of the contracts that have been given to a few favored companies, which have arms backlogs extending for years ahead? In expansion of the plant capacity of the industry, would it not be well to put the new furnaces and mills where they will be most needed and most economical, rather than depending solely on the initiative of individual corporations?

Steel production is now slackening after the peak which accompanied the beginning of the intensified defense program. One can predict approximately when defense demands will press hard on capacity again. In the meantime, failure fully to use the mills means an irretrievable loss of steel either for military or for civilian purposes in the future. Time cannot be recaptured. Planning would help to avoid its loss.

In automobiles, a study by the United Automobile Workers shows a similiar possibility. Some plants have spare capacity; a few are entirely out of production. Seasonal fluctuation is marked. A joint council to plan the use of the industry as a whole could, according to union president W. P. Reuther, turn out 500 standardized planes a day in a short time, and step up production more rapidly than the effort to create entirely new facilities. Whether Mr. Reuther is right about this only technicians can say, but it is folly to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

overlook entirely the possibilities of managing the auto industry as one, instead of handing out hit-or-miss contracts to Ford, Packard and the rest.

The administrative body which Mr. Murray recommends for each major defense industry is logical. Three representatives of management, three of the unions in the industry and one government representative to act as chairman would compose each industry council. The chairman ought to represent the government's interest in rapid and efficient production. If management representatives stood out against the public interest, the chairman, together with the labor representatives, would be a majority. If labor should balk, the majority would be against it. The councils, according to the plan, would be adequately staffed. They would work not only for full defense production but for supplying civilian demands as far as possible, for industrial peace and labor standards, for increasing employment as rapidly as workers were required, and for training of workers.

The possible advantages of having each industry operated as a unit, by those who have become familiar with its potentialities through working in it, has long been recognized in engineering science. Officials in Washington, parceling out orders on the basis of bids from big companies, do not have the background of technical knowledge required for utilizing the full capacities of a great nation like this. They can learn much from men on the job. By the council procedure, backstairs dealings would be discouraged. In addition, nothing is more important than to utilize the full energies of the workers in pushing defense. These energies can be enlisted only if the workers are given responsibility, through their organizations. Inefficiencies and employer sabotage could not long withstand their criticism, as the experience of Britain has proved.

It is objected that once you allow an industry to get together in order to "rationalize" itself, the employers will promptly curtail production and raise prices, bribing the workers to support them by granting higher wages. The NRA is cited as a case in point. But this danger is minimized in the present situation by two important factors.

Under the NRA, we were in depression, purchasing power was lagging and there was little urgent effective demand in the markets. The natural tendency was therefore for each industry to protect itself against the effects of an economy of scarcity. But at present there are more orders, both from government and individual consumers, than industry can possibly fill. Purchasing power in the markets is expanding rapidly. The government's interest in enlarged production is immediate and insistent.

The second factor is the interest of the great labor organizations of the basic industries in full employment. They are not exclusive craft unions concerned with protecting limited memberships, but have as a major aim the ending of unemployment and part time. They see clearly labor's predominant interest in full production and in the higher standard of life which only full production can bring about.

Labor will not sit idly by, under these conditions, seeing employers make enormous profits on defense orders while they fail to use or expand capacity to the fullest possible extent.

All the industry councils, under this plan, would be under a National Defense Board which would aid them, review their decisions and settle inter-industrial disputes. This Board would apparently play substantially the same roles as the present NDAC, except that it would have equal representation from management and labor.

If we were to try to express suitable objectives for American industry in this crisis, we could differ little from those set forth in Mr. Murray's program, as follows:

1. To guarantee the production of armaments in needed quantities and on time, by achieving the highest possible productive efficiency of American industry, through the full and complete coöperation of industry, organized labor and government.

2. To guarantee the production of domestic, or non-military, goods in adequate quantities so as to further improve and extend the American standard of living through a more equitable distribution of the national income, thereby improving the morale of the American people, and preventing a chaotic breakdown of our domestic economy when the national-defense program is completed.

3. To preserve the basic democratic rights of the American people; namely, the freedoms of speech, assembly and worship, and the free right to organize into independent associations for lawful purposes, such as the right of labor to organize into unions of its own choosing for collective bargaining and other mutual protection.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

Editors

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY GEORGE SOULE
STARK YOUNG

Assistant Editors: OTIS FERGUSON ELIZABETH HULING

Contributing Editors

H. N. BRAILSFORD JOHN T. FLYNN E. C. LINDEMAN
JONATHAN MITCHELL R. G. TUGWELL

Treasurer: DANIEL MEBANE

E. G. WOOD *Advertising Manager*
BYRON DEXTER *Circulation Manager*

SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTIONS SIX DOLLARS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

EDITED AND PRODUCED UNDER UNION CONDITIONS BY CONTRACT WITH THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE GUILD, LOCAL 18, UOPWA, CIO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Britain Can Pay

THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL that we lend arms to Britain may sound strange to a nation bemused by the symbols of money and debt. But, before we pass judgment on it, let us stop to see just what those symbols mean. The job is not easy; it is like translating from a dead language. But those who like to think in realities rather than in empty phrases may find the task entertaining as well as instructive.

Britain started this war with large financial resources in the United States. She now is near the end of her money rope. Though she has not yet spent all she has, the necessary commitments ahead (it often takes eighteen months or longer between orders and deliveries) have nearly exhausted her available purchasing power.

Britain might borrow from private sources in this country, if it were not for the Johnson Act, which forbids our citizens to lend money to governments in default on former debts. The United States government might legally lend the money, but that would be contrary to the spirit of the Johnson Act, and Secretary Morgenthau has rightly said that he will not act without congressional authority. Ways might be found to finance arms-manufacturers by domestic loans to them. But eventually somebody would have to furnish the cash to repay such loans. Under the Neutrality Act, cash must be paid when the goods are delivered.

There was good logic in the Johnson Act. It was not mere stinginess that prevented most of the belligerents in the last war from paying their debts. The money we lent them was spent, not for additions to their national wealth, but for instruments of destruction. After receipt of all these expensive goods, their capacity to produce for peace was not increased one iota. What capacity to pay they did have, we chose not to permit them to exercise. A creditor nation cannot get its loans repaid unless it is willing in the long run to accept a surplus of imports. Our economy was adjusted to a surplus of exports—especially of agricultural products like cotton, wheat and tobacco. In order to keep out the foreign goods necessary for payment, we added enough new courses to our tariff wall to make it higher than ever in history.

The Johnson Act was therefore a sign erected which read, "Railroad Crossing. Stop, Look and Listen. The next time any nation wants to borrow to make war, remember that it won't want to pay and we may not want it to pay. The best plan is not to make the loans in the first place." That was, and is, sound common sense.

The cash-and-carry provisions of the Neutrality Act were based on a correct analysis of what happened between 1914 and 1917. The law was, of course, misnamed. It had little to do with traditional legal neutrality, and should have been called, "An Act to help keep us from being drawn into wars that we do not want to enter." The allied nations in the former war began by eking out their purchasing power in this country through borrowing from private sources. The time came when their credit was rapidly approaching its end. But some of our citizens had bought their bonds and would lose heavily if the Allies were defeated. And our industry and agriculture had built on their loan-financed purchases a war boom which would collapse if they could not go on buying.

As Ambassador Page pointed out at the time, the only way out was for the United States government to lend the Allies what was necessary. It was assumed it could not do this without entering the War. That was not the only reason we declared war on Germany. But the Neutrality Act, by its cash-and-carry policy, seeks to prevent the unforeseen pressure of trade alone from dragging us into a new war. It does not even try to prevent us from helping another nation at war whenever we shall decide that it is to our national interest to do so. It is but another signpost which says, "Before you help again in this way, stop and decide where the national interest lies."

At the beginning of this war we had already gone so far as to make up our minds that we wanted to help Britain and France enough to repeal the embargo on munitions. It was rightly said at the time that this need not embroil us. Since then, our partisanship in the struggle and the requirements of Britain have increased. But we are on the brink of denying Britain the arms she needs and has been buying, for the irrelevant reason that her means of payment are drying up. Now is the time to make the decisions which the Johnson and neutrality laws have defined for us.

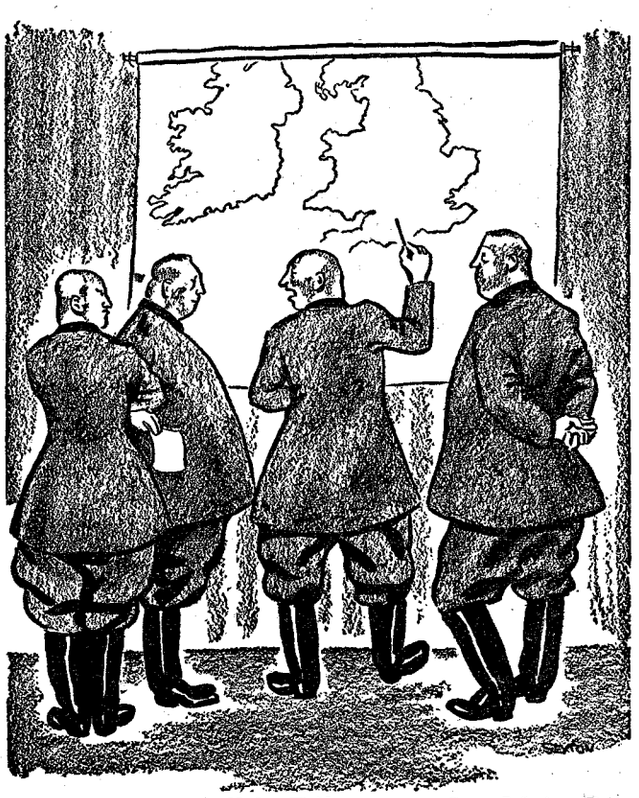
Most of us suppose that Britain has been "paying" for what she has bought. But what payment have we received? First of all, gold. Of what use is it? We do not eat it or build houses of it, or even make it into wedding rings or watch cases. We bury it in Fort Knox. Precious materials and labor hours—which might have gone toward increasing the welfare of our people—have been shipped abroad in exchange for something we have to dig cellars for. Worse than that, the gold is a source of great worry, for it increases bank reserves to mountainous heights and threatens us with a potential uncontrollable inflation. The gold might be of use in the future if there were anything of real value abroad which we wanted and for which foreigners would accept gold in payment. But Hitler won't accept it. If Britain loses the war, the gold standard will go too. Our energies will then have been poured down a rat-hole in Europe, while South African gold,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dug and shipped with great pain, will have been poured down a rat-hole here. We are fools to believe that in taking gold we are getting value received. We shall be economic lunatics as well if we allow Britain to be defeated after she has paid us so much of it.

We are also being "paid" by bank balances and securities owned in this country by Britishers. Do not the Americans who receive these checks or bonds or other bits of paper acquire titles to solid wealth? They can buy other bonds or stocks with them, or use them to purchase automobiles, radios or butler-hours. But no international payment is involved unless somebody, sometime, uses an equivalent amount to buy goods from Britain. And that is where the rub comes. Disposal of this British property does just as much to make this nation a larger creditor as if we lent Britain an equivalent amount of money. It does just as much to alter the balance of payments, and of trade. It is as difficult to bring about an excess of imports arising from an international transfer of ownership as it is to bring about one arising from foreign loans. The Johnson Act, to be complete, ought to have forbidden Americans to buy foreign-owned securities in order to help foreigners make war, as well as forbidding them to extend war loans. The chances are that we shall never receive from Britain enough imports to pay the interest and dividends on the certificates of wealth with which some of our citizens are now being "paid."

Such usable goods as we are now importing from Britain, or such as we might normally import in a future period of peace, may be regarded as a real



"Your objective will be Tilleygate-on-Sea, Major Betteldorf. The natives are said to be unfriendly."

though partial payment for the munitions we are sending her. In so far as we want to buy Scotch, or English woolens or leather, or insurance from Lloyd's or cargo space in British ships, we can collect. But the simple truth is that in so far as the ordinary signs and symbols of wealth are concerned, we have not been paid anything we want for the war supplies Britain has bought so far, and probably never shall be paid for them. We have been able merely, by going through the proper rituals, to give these things away without troubling our tender business conscience.

International trade, say the textbooks of economics, is fundamentally an exchange of goods and services. Our eye lights on the word services and questions what it may include. The loan of capital is a service. Insurance is a service. Perhaps Britain is now rendering services to us that *are* sufficient to pay for the planes, ships and tanks. What about the services of the British Navy and Royal Air Force? What about the Britons who, by fighting and dying in their own interest, also keep Hitler on the other side of the Atlantic in ours? In furnishing Britain some of the means to do that, we need ask for no other payment. In any event we shall not get any other. The real question burns large and direct, behind all deceptive monetary smoke-screens of a business economy. Is it worth the real cost of munitions-making to strengthen Britain's hand? If so, why should we desist simply because she cannot return worthless counters?

We might, by tacit consent, adopt some old or new ritual in which we do not believe, just to make things easier for the stupid, or to avoid giving Hitler technical excuse for declaring war on us. We could even put a money value on so much resistance by British sailors and airmen, and match it against the money value of what they need for fighting. We could, if we liked, "lend" Britain money, provided enough of us were willing to acknowledge in advance that it would not be returned. Or we could adopt Mr. Roosevelt's simple formula of lending the ships, planes and guns themselves. Any ritual will do, provided we really know what we are about and have weighed the consequences.

There is a curious superstition that if we depart from the ordinary business routine Hitler will recognize us as a belligerent and then we shall really be "at war." This superstition clings to the old world that Hitler long since has abandoned. He is smarter than that. He does not split technical hairs about belligerency and non-belligerency, about neutrality and declarations of war. He knows perfectly well what we are doing. He does not hesitate to attack any nation that is in the way of his purposes, no matter how pure and innocent of intent to offend it may be. If it has furnished no provocation he invents one. If we aid Britain legally or illegally, by design or by force of circumstances, it is all one to him. So long as we give any aid to Britain at all,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he will be prevented from fighting us only because (1) he cannot get at us, (2) we are too strong. The sole protection against him is to make sure that Britain stays in the way, while we prepare our second lines. In exchange for arms to Britain we should be prepared to accept anything from Indian wampum to promises of green cheese in the moon.

We should, that is, as long as Britain is in danger. When it comes to helping Britain to be so victorious as to write the peace terms, we can ask a higher price—if it ever comes to that. We could then demand the kind of peace that would be worth the sacrifice. We not only could, but could fail to do so at our peril. But that is another story. GEORGE SOULE

Automobiles of 1941

HITLER'S blitzkrieg on London, plus a bitterly fought national election, made the debut of the new automobiles seem something less than an all-important event this year. Furthermore, now that more and more manufacturers announce and display their new lines weeks, even months, before the annual automobile show, it is difficult to whip the public into the state of breathless waiting which used to precede the show. It will be necessary to set the annual show ahead again if it is to catch up with the manufacturers who have been jumping the gun. Unless we forgo the luxury of annual model changes for the coming war years, we may in time see the next year's models of some makes taking their bows before the current models of other makes are off the assembly lines.

Be that as it may, the big thing at present from the standpoint of the automobile manufacturer is that cars are selling. The coming year promises to be one of the industry's greatest—approaching that "golden age" of 1929. The October, 1940, registration of cars and trucks was close to 400,000, in comparison with 338,596 units in the same month of 1929.

On top of this rising demand for cars, the automobile industry is taking over a large share of armament production. Ford is building plant facilities to make 4,000 Pratt and Whitney air-cooled 18-cylinder airplane engines for the government. Packard will produce Rolls-Royce Merlin 12-cylinder aircraft engines for this country and Britain. Chevrolet and Hudson are to make army trucks and ammunition components. Four General Motors divisions will produce machine guns and Chrysler has a contract for 1,000 25-ton tanks. (Each tank will carry a crew of five, have a top speed of 40 m.p.h. and will be equipped with one 37-millimeter, one 75-millimeter and one anti-aircraft gun.)

And the armament program is only beginning to get under way. By this time next year, the production of automobiles for the consumer may be a secondary matter. Any plans for radical design changes, such as rear-engined, tear-drop cars, are in cold storage. The war put them there. There are some predictions that it may be several years before the manufacturers will again present whole lines of new models. Which means that in 1944 the car owner may take real pride in saying to neighbor Jones: "Yes, I have one of the latest 1941 models."

As a matter of fact, study of the 1941 models reveals little that is essentially new or that is an improvement on the 1940 cars. This year we get a little more of everything we had before—more power, more speed, more room, more "clutchless" cars, and more uniformity. Yes, and more price.

Hupmobile disappeared last year. This year Graham fades out. Ford's none-too-successful V-8 60, economy model, has been dropped. However, it is rumored that Ford may bring out a new 6-cylinder "cheap" car around the first of the year. The company has just announced a new "stripped" model, priced $25 to $35 lower than the De Luxe, to meet the price advantage of the Plymouth. This model comes in black only; savings are also made on upholstery and trim. General Motors' La Salle line and the Cadillac V-16 engine have been discontinued, as has Ford's Lincoln V-12 engine.

Mass-Production Cars Compared.—The only really new car this year is Nash's Ambassador 600, which is priced at $780 (4-door sedan) and thus breaks into the "low-priced" field in competition with the Ford De Luxe at $797, Plymouth 6 at $780, Chevrolet Master De Luxe at $795 and the Studebaker Champion at $770. This car follows the trend set by the Studebaker Champion in reducing weight and thereby enabling a smaller engine (75 h.p.) to give the car performance comparable to that of the cars in this group which are heavier and have greater horsepower.

The four models last-named account for about 56 percent of total car sales in the United States. For the first seven months in 1940, 25 percent of all the cars sold were Chevrolets, 16.4 percent were Fords, 13.2 percent were Plymouths and about 2 percent Studebaker Champions.

The table below provides a brief comparison of the salient characteristics relating to the performance and economy of these popular models. The 4-cylinder Willys is included for comparison, although its price, $665, is considerably lower than that of the other cars in the group.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

	Maximum H.P.	*Weight (lbs.)*	*Weight Per H.P.*[1]
Chevrolet Master De Luxe 6	90 @ 3,300 RPM[2]	3,090	39.9
Ford De Luxe V-8	85 @ 3,800 RPM	2,950	40.6
Nash Ambassador 600	75 @ 3,600 RPM	2,550	40.7
Plymouth 6	87 @ 3,800 RPM	2,889	39.0
Studebaker Champion 6	80 @ 4,000 RPM	2,450	36.9
Willys Americar 4	63 @ 3,800 RPM	2,460	47.0

Weight per horsepower is a rough check on performance—the higher the figure, the lower the performance in terms of acceleration and hill-climbing ability. Gas consumption increases with higher horsepower and greater weight. Of the cars listed, the Studebaker Champion has the best accelerating ability, while its low weight and its power give good gas economy. I would reaffirm my opinion of last year that this car has the best all-around characteristics of the cars in this class—although it cannot be called "low-priced."

The performance characteristics of the Chevrolet, Ford, Plymouth and the new Nash Ambassador are about on a par, but the Nash should prove to be the most economical of the four because of its lower weight and horsepower. The Chevrolet, with its increased horsepower and weight, probably will be the most costly to operate. The Willys Americar, because of its small 4-cylinder engine, will give better economy than any in this group. This, along with its lower initial cost, means that it has definite advantages for those who want real economy and are willing to forgo power, performance and bigness.

It is not possible in this brief review of the 1941 cars to analyze and compare all the cars in the upper price brackets. It should be emphasized that any of the above-mentioned automobiles have all that is needed in fast, comfortable transportation. All cars which are more expensive are in the luxury class. Many of the higher-priced cars are built on the same chassis and have the same body, with minor refinements to give distinction and to justify the higher prices.

It costs about one dollar a day—$365 per year—to own and operate a car in the Ford, Chevrolet, Plymouth class if it is run on an average of about 10,000 miles per year. This is a big expenditure for all but the near wealthy. The automobile promises to displace clothing as the third most important item in the American family budget—and in fact has already done so for some income classes in certain sections of the country.

Important Features of the Major Lines.—General Motors is the outstanding proponent of the theory that competition is best met by giving bigger and more powerful cars, not by reducing prices. Sales figures for Chevrolet and Buick show that the theory works. Car owners grumble a great deal when they get only fourteen to seventeen miles per gallon, but when they are in the market for a new car they generally fall for a long wheel base, luxurious upholstery and a fast getaway, even though, in two or three years, operating costs equal or are higher than the initial cost of the car.

The weight of the Chevrolet has been increased by more than 100 pounds, and in an attempt to compensate for this greater weight the engine horsepower has been upped by 5, to 90 h.p.—an all-time high for a "low-priced" car. The body is longer, wider and lower, and thus follows the general design of the "torpedo" body introduced by General Motors in 1940.

These changes—more weight, larger dimensions, greater power—characterize practically all the General Motors cars. The window area, as for most 1941 models, remains about the same. Built-in running boards, concealed by the lower part of the door, are featured on all GM lines.

The Buick 60, 70 and 90, with 165 h.p., have the most powerful engine of any 1941 American car and probably the most powerful of any passenger car in the world. (Europeans cannot afford to use 165 horsepower to transport from one to six people.) In comparison, General Motor's most luxurious car, the Cadillac, is underpowered, with only 150 h.p.

The Buick 40 and 50 series have also been stepped up in horsepower to 115 and 125, respectively. Increased horsepower in these lines has been accomplished, first, by increasing the compression ratio and second, by the widely heralded "compound dual carburetor," which is really two carburetors, each of a different make—one a Stromberg, the other a Carter. The auxiliary valves open at different speeds, giving a more balanced fuel mixture to all cylinders, which results, it is claimed, in more efficient utilization of fuel.

Aside from the general changes in increased horsepower and body size, there are few noteworthy changes in the new Pontiac models. The chief innovation in engine design is the incorporation of a full-flow, permanent-type oil cleaner located in the oil sump. It is expected to clean the oil for the life of the engine without attention.

The Oldsmobile Special Series has a new streamlined body with a rear end which approaches the principle of the tear-drop design. Real streamlining is effective only at relatively high speeds, but if functional design is beautiful and greater speed the chief concern, the design of this series is a step in the right direction.

The Hydra-Matic transmission, fully automatic with direct fourth gear, is continued on Oldsmobile this year without change. However, it still comes as special equipment at extra cost. It has also been adopted by Cadillac as optional equipment at extra cost.

Ford continues with the De Luxe, Super De Luxe and Mercury 8 in the low and medium-price classes

[1] Based on shipping weight plus 500 pounds passenger load.
[2] Revolutions per minute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Changes in spring design, shackles, shock absorbers and the addition of stabilizing bars are presumed to have improved riding qualities. The frames have been redesigned to give them greater rigidity. The V-8 85 and V-8 95 h.p. engines remain unchanged. A step toward lowering the cost of replacing damaged fenders is made by building up the fender out of several parts, any one of which can be replaced. The Lincoln Zephyr, Lincoln Continental and Lincoln Custom are again offered with minor changes. The Continental, introduced last year, is still one of the smartest, low, long-lined automobiles on the market. Unlike most manufacturers, Ford did not increase power this year.

The power of all Chrysler 1941 cars was stepped up, the increase ranging from 2 to 5 h.p. The fluid drive, now available on all Chrysler, Dodge and De Soto models, represents their chief claim to distinction. On the Chrysler and De Soto Sixes it is used in combination with a new four-speed, semi-automatic transmission which is shifted between third and fourth or first and second gear by depressing the accelerator pedal. Chrysler eights may be had with fluid coupling and three-speed transmission with overdrive. In both types the clutch is used only when gears are shifted. As with all fluid couplings—including Oldsmobile's Hydra-Matic transmission—the car may be started on level roads with gears engaged without operating the clutch. For fast take-off or for starting up a hill the gears must be in low.

Hydraulic clutches, with their ability to get the car under way without jerks and stalls and the consequent reduction in wear and tear, will no doubt be more widely adopted as soon as their cost is brought within the range of the average buyer.

The new Nash Ambassador 600 has already been mentioned. This car's low weight is due primarily to the unit construction (frame integral with the body) of the type used on the Lincoln Zephyr. It has independent front-wheel suspension and coil springs in rear. Like the Studebaker Champion, this car, with its comparatively low weight and small engine, has much to commend it and follows a trend which, it is to be hoped, will become increasingly prominent. Changes in the other Nash lines are not significant.

In addition to the comments previously made about the Studebaker Champion, attention should be called to its increase in horsepower by two and its somewhat greater weight. If the future brings similar changes, the car will lose its position as the most economical in its price class. The horsepower of the two other Studebaker lines—the Commander and the President—has also been increased; other changes are of minor importance. In the Gilmore Economy Run of 1940 the Champion and also the other Studebaker cars took first place in their respective classes.

Mechanically the Hudson and Packard automobiles remain practically unchanged. Promotional efforts are being centered around exterior styling and color combinations. Full mechanical refrigeration or cooling, first announced last year, is now available at extra cost on all Packard models. Windows on the Custom 180 are power-operated—that is, they can be raised or lowered by means of a switch on each panel door.

Safety Again.—The death rate from automobile accidents per 100,000,000 vehicle miles dropped to 12.1 for 1939—a new low. Nevertheless there were 32,600 lives taken in the nation's automobile traffic in 1939—35 percent of all the accidental deaths during the year. In other words, every day automobiles in America kill almost half as many people as are being slain in England each day by Hitler's bombs.

Nor do death figures tell the whole story. The 1939 accident record shows 1,150,000 non-fatal injuries and property damage amounting to $750,000,000.

Indications are that the 1939 death rate has been equaled if not exceeded in 1940; and in 1941 the rate may be still higher owing to the increased emphasis manufacturers have given to power and speed in the 1941 cars. For the greatest single contributing factor to fatal auto accidents is excessive speed. Summaries from thirty-six state traffic authorities indicate that 20 percent of the fatal accidents occurring in 1939 involved drivers who were either exceeding the speed limit or driving too fast for road conditions. Contrary to general opinion, a far greater proportion of the fatal accidents involve the new high-powered cars than the old creeping jalopies.

To what extent modern styling and design contribute to the accident record is not known with certainty, since dead drivers and smashed cars tell few tales. But it is certain that low seats, blind spots, slow steering, sloping windshields and rear windows are factors.

Dean A. Fales, professor of automotive engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, made an admirable summary of the problem of safe and economical driving at a recent meeting of the Society of Automotive Engineers. To quote: "Where average roads are narrow and often highly crowned, where sharp turns and hills are common, and where winter conditions complicate driving, we want—and for safety need—better all-round vision, more effective windshield defrosting, higher seating positions, better seats, improved pressure ventilation, faster steering, a strong caster action or its equivalent, a small moment of inertia, and more weight on the rear wheels; greater ground clearance and less fore-and-aft overhang, larger diameter wheels for better traction, room to put on tire chains, and room for them to function without scraping body sides and striking mudguards, more room in the bodies and less under the mudguards. In short, disregard the 100-m.p.h. speeds and give us a handier and more useful car for our particular needs."

D. H. PALMER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Whose Insurance Companies?

THE TNEC'S INVESTIGATION of industrial insurance—the insurance of the low-paid workers—received reluctant newspaper attention; its subsequent inquiry into general insurance-company practices has been almost altogether lost. Yet the latter demonstrated that the companies represent a vast concentration of economic power, and gave at least a hint of the ways in which this power has been used.

Brilliant as the TNEC's investigation was, it almost certainly did not go far enough. Partly this was due to obstructionism within the TNEC itself. Senator King held himself self-appointed to protect the insurance-company executives against the questions of the TNEC's counsel, Mr. Gesell of the SEC. Chairman O'Mahoney robbed the inquiry of its bite by insisting, in a formal statement, that neither he nor his colleagues had so much as even considered the social desirability of federal regulation.

Nevertheless, the TNEC's hearings raised questions of incalculable importance, for which an answer must some day be found. In the last few years, we have heard many times that the reason our economy has not gone ahead—absorbed the unemployed and increased wages—lies partly in the failure of capital to flow freely into industry. Together with the savings banks, the insurance companies are supposed to constitute the funnel through which the savings of the average man and woman become available for investment. The TNEC's hearings showed that, in 1938, the insurance companies had $4,300,000,000 in new money.

Was this money used as efficiently as possible? The insurance-company executives appearing before the TNEC pointed out, quite properly, that they were trustees for the policy-holders, and could not place their funds in new enterprises bearing speculative risks. One company, according to testimony, made a determined search for "small" business loans, but, of more than two hundred and fifty applications investigated, it was able to find only two really safe ones.

It was clearly brought out before the TNEC, however, that the insurance companies were also holding back from supposedly old, established industries. Executives of nearly every company testified that a substantial part of their funds either had temporary refuge in federal government obligations or else were in cash. Mr. Lubin, head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, tried to force the witnesses to explain this seeming mystery. A few insurance-company officials admitted that they felt the current rate of return on "safe" investments was too low, that they did not like to purchase securities yielding less than 3.5 percent.

Here is a problem that demands the fullest consideration. Since its inception, the whole effort of the New Deal has been to bring down the price of capital, the interest rate, as a means of stimulating production. It has created a dozen federal lending agencies for this single purpose. Yet the insurance companies, controlling, each year, half as much new money as the total federal budget, seem unmoved.

Much testimony was heard on the influence of the insurance companies over industry. It was shown that several of the companies and the New York City banks have interlocking directorates. Mr. Winthrop W. Aldrich, head of the Chase bank and brother-in-law of Mr. John D. Rockefeller Jr., appeared before the TNEC to explain the relations between the Chase and the Metropolitan Life. It was readily shown that the Chase had obtained deposits of Metropolitan funds, and that, in some cases, similar favors had been extended to Chase's correspondent banks.

The only cases where it was shown that the insurance companies had openly interested themselves in the management of corporations whose securities they held were those where formal bankruptcy had occurred. Yet, although no examples were given, it is hard to believe that the economic power represented by the insurance companies' immense wealth is not exerted over the country's industrial life day by day, week by week. To prove the existence of this influence, and estimate its effects, would require a long but valuable investigation. Although the companies' investment policy has been unwisely conservative, in 1938 they invested $1,900,000,000 by negotiation with corporate management. Before such deals were closed, there must necessarily have been a reasonably close relationship between insurance executives and corporation officials. Into this relationship the TNEC did not inquire.

There is not the slightest doubt about the influence of the insurance companies over agriculture. Everyone remembers the Iowa farm strikes against the insurance companies in the Hoover depression. The companies still hold 10.5 percent of the farm-mortgage debt, and, as a group, constitute the nation's greatest farmers.

Farm mortgages and mortgages on urban homes form another problem that the TNEC felt itself compelled to skim across. In the Farm Credit Administration and the HOLC, the New Deal has set up credit agencies to deal with farm and urban-home debt. In a sense, both may be regarded as instruments for the federal regulation of the insurance companies, for one of their principal results has been to put pressure on the insurance companies to lower interest rates and to adopt more scientific debt instruments.

A separate problem arises concerning urban housing. As has been said, the insurance executives complained bitterly before the TNEC of the current lack

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of safe and profitable outlets for their funds. Such an outlet, it might be thought, would be mass low-rental housing developments. The TNEC investigation shows that only two companies have put any money whatever into housing projects; the Metropolitan Life has invested $10,970,000, or .22 percent of its admitted assets, and the Prudential $4,563,000, or .12.

On the treatment of policy-holders, the TNEC inquiry also raised many problems, without fully settling them. A compilation prepared by the gifted Mr. Ernest J. Howe, special adviser of the SEC, showed differences of almost 100 percent in the cost of policies among different companies. Other figures indicated that certain classes of policy-holders have been sacrificed to others. Holders of policies with disability clauses obtained marked advantages. Their policies caused a loss of $408,516,000 to the companies in a ten-year period, a loss that, of course, ultimately falls on all policy-holders. Many years ago, Mr. Justice Brandeis' investigation of insurance in Massachusetts showed that handsome executive salaries, expensive office buildings, commissions for an excessive number of agents, made premiums unnecessarily high; the TNEC demonstrated that the companies are still unreformed.

The TNEC made two positive suggestions. The first was for modernization of the sixty-year mortality table now employed. Since the expectancy of life has increased, a modern table would tend to reduce premiums. Insurance-company executives generally agreed that a new table should be adopted, but pointed out that the sixty-year-old table is required by the insurance laws of a number of states. The TNEC's second suggestion was for a uniform, modern accounting system. Mr. Howe showed that identical bonds were carried by some companies at 7.8 percent below market value, by others at 60 percent above. Again, company executives accepted the TNEC's proposal, and agreed that, in many cases, the companies' annual statements might mislead the policy-holder.

The question of federal regulation of the insurance companies, which Senator O'Mahoney so hastily dodged, cannot be postponed forever. The TNEC has already proved an enormous concentration of economic power. The evidence so far produced suggests that the companies are refusing to lend their funds except at what may well be unsocially high interest rates, and, on the other hand, are exacting unsocially high payments from the policy-holders. The TNEC's investigation is bravely begun, but we ought not say that it is finished.

STEPHEN CARTER

Who Won the Election?

MY DEAR CONGRESSMAN:

When you take your seat in the new Congress on January 3, the superficial indications of political climate surrounding you will be so different from those on election day, November 5, that you must sometimes wonder just what the voters said.

We have seen many times that yesterday's election verdict can be almost as dead as yesterday's newspaper. We do see around us today the statements and full-page advertisements, we hear the speeches and personal appeals, we are aware of newly formed national organizations, all trying to kill that verdict of November 5. Or if not to kill, then to nullify it.

The election, if it meant anything at all, was a victory for democracy in the sense of that term which the dictators mean when they revile democracy and call for its extermination. The election was a blow to defeatism and appeasement. It cried defiance to that narrow isolationism which has been probably the most overworked slogan of our native demagogues for a generation. It was a clear pledge of all aid to the enemies of Nazism. I'm not telling you; I'm reminding you.

You would not think that was the decision, however, from reading the statements of the "No-Foreign-War" crusaders, the Defend-America-First boys, the die-hard anti-British groups and all the others who have been blinding their eyes to the catastrophe hatched in Berlin.

What did the American election mean in the world?

It was interpreted with a completeness I have seen nowhere else in news articles in The New York Times of November 7, the Thursday after election day, and this view obviously is no partisanship.

A newspaper in Stockholm was quoted as understanding, "Mr. Roosevelt's reëlection means for European people that America's foreign policy will be continued with the same power and consequences."

The Asahi of Tokyo thought that "The principal factor in his victory was the President's policy of positive aid to Britain and the defense of democracy." The Herald of Auckland, New Zealand, found that "The great American republic has ratified before the world its resolve to let nothing stand in the way of Mr. Roosevelt's policy, which the Axis powers hate."

Close at home, in Mexico, Central America and South America, the election effect was recognized by Times correspondents as a setback for the dictators. These countries saw United States leadership heartened and steadied in opposition to the Axis. Turkey saw a new reason to hold out against Axis intimidation. Britain was fortified and encouraged. The guarded comment from German and Italian papers attempted to conceal disappointment under indifference.

There was not one report, not one passage over the face of that television mirror of the world's under-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

standing, which did not confirm our own endorsement of full resistance. And not one credible voice at home gave the slightest contradiction to this impression.

No one conceived of Mr. Willkie as lukewarm to the needs of Britain. But the universal response was that America had chosen the strongest possible means of saying No to all compromise and to all obstruction in connection with this war. We had told the world.

Mr. Hoover had campaigned for a check-Roosevelt policy. He was not supported.

Colonel Lindbergh said the war was merely another tussle over the balance of power. The voters thought differently.

But exactly two weeks after election day, when Congress voted against quick adjournment, many opponents of the President said loudly that it was a vote of "want of confidence." It would be presumptuous for you to take your cue from these voices rather than from the voters. Pressure groups can turn the heat on you to a burning temperature, but your guide to public opinion must remain the votes which elected you.

Strong influences are at work now to induce you to turn aside from the foreign policy which this country has been following and which the election confirmed. It would be ridiculous to label all these influences as Fifth Column, Fascist or even benighted. Many of them, in fact, are precisely that. But the sincerity of many others cannot be questioned; neither can their determination and their lavish resources.

The hesitant, short-sighted elements that saw Mr. Willkie as the lesser evil and lost with him in November have rallied now to change public opinion—or to make you think it is changed. They would wash our hands of all but picayune interests. They shrink from giving offense to the brigands. Allowing for full diversity of motive, we see one identical result from all their efforts—a sterilizing of our aid to the enemies of the enemy of mankind and a cry of peace which means defeat, for us as well.

You and your colleagues, looking around the horizon of the world, will see few other popular legislative bodies now surviving which have the power to make decisions. You represent the people actually. It is a modest request, in view of past performances, to hope that you may increase the confidence of this country in representative government. You can do that, I believe, only by courageous expression again and again of that voice which spoke on election day.

Is this a war policy? Quite the contrary. It is the greatest peace policy, the greatest life-saving policy in the world. It means life for you and for us, for all the things that Americans cherish. As a voter, I ask you never to forget the decision we voters made.

GEORGE BRITT

Murray: CIO's New Boss

MR. MURRAY, the new president of the CIO, is a hard person to describe and explain. There are very few men like him in the labor movement, politics or anywhere else. What makes him baffling is that he always says, simply and directly, what he thinks, and acts precisely the way he talks. At least as far as I can discover, no one has ever seen him moved by personal affection or dislike, by vanity, ambition or revenge.

At its recent Atlantic City convention, the CIO was wildly torn between partisans of President Roosevelt, for whom the chief spokesman was Defense Commissioner Sidney Hillman, and partisans of Mr. John L. Lewis. The only person or issue about which both sides were relatively unemotional was Mr. Murray. Both told him that he would have to take Mr. Lewis' job in order to hold the CIO together. In his soft Scottish burr, Mr. Murray replied that he didn't want the CIO presidency, and, what was more, wouldn't take it unless he had the support of all constituent unions and a free hand with the organizing staff. Thereupon, he went, as he said, on a one-man strike lasting a week.

CIO delegates and newspaper reporters spent endless time discussing this supposed strategy. Mr. Murray would be Mr. Lewis' stooge, meant to obliterate Mr. Lewis' influence, wanted to coöperate with Mr. Roosevelt, wouldn't coöperate with Mr. Roosevelt. I am convinced that Mr. Murray was indulging in no strategy whatever. He really didn't want the CIO headship. "I'd have liked to have kept slogging along where I was [in charge of the steel workers' union]," Mr. Murray says, and means it. And once his two clearly stated conditions were met, he undramatically took the job.

Mr. Murray's presidential speech at Atlantic City left many of the delegates befogged. They had just been through a great fight, in which powerful emotions had been aroused. Mr. Murray began by stating unashamedly his "love" of John L. Lewis. Then, by implication, he sharply, shrewdly criticized Mr. Lewis' recent tactics. He ended by announcing baldly that peace with the AFL, in any near future, was impossible. The Lewis followers were upset by the speech; so were the Hillman men.

Perhaps one way to describe Mr. Murray would be to say that he is a possessor of the antique virtues. He is a character out of Plutarch. He said he loved Mr. Lewis because he does love him. But his affection for Mr. Lewis, in Mr. Murray's mind, doesn't in the least absolve him from the solemn moral duty of deciding

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for himself whether Mr. Lewis is right or wrong, and, when he is wrong, saying so. And—although he knew it would have pleased Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Hillman enormously—he wouldn't say that peace between the CIO and the AFL was probable, because he doesn't think it is probable, and has formidable evidence to support his view.

Mr. Murray is fifty-four, gray, with thinning gray hair, heavy black eyebrows and eyes that regard all-comers with a steady, unblinking, slightly inhuman stare. Because of the contrast between his manner and Mr. Lewis' gaudy showmanship and patent vanity, the usual adjective for Mr. Murray has been "modest." But modesty is a kind of exaggeration, and Mr. Murray never exaggerates. Recently, in discussing the contribution labor might make to national defense, he stated in matter-of-fact tones: "I know as much about the economics of coal as any man alive." He was simply voicing an incontrovertible fact.

To measure the almost unfathomable depths of Mr. Murray's self-assurance—or, in antique terms, serenity of soul—you probably have to go back a bit. Mr. Murray's father was head of a coal miners' local in Blantine, in Lanarkshire, Scotland, where Phil Murray was born. And his grandfather had been head of the same miners' local before that. "There were never any scabs or fighting there," Mr. Murray says. "When there was a strike, the mines stayed closed until it was settled." It was a community united, a community whose culture rested on unionism.

When Phil Murray was sixteen, his father, seeking to better his lot, brought his family to America. Phil had then been working in the mines around Blantine since he was ten; his father and grandmother had gone into the mines when they were nine. The Murray family went to western Pennsylvania. Within a year, his father had been thrown out of work and blacklisted for union activity—the same thing happened to John L. Lewis' father—and Phil had been jailed by the coal-and-iron police.

The miners are labor's anointed, at least in their own estimation; they look down on the workers of every other industry. Mr. Murray knows in detail the record of the German miners, not merely in opposing Hitler and before that in defeating the French invasion of the Ruhr, but back for a century and a half, and the records of the Spanish, Polish and Hungarian miners. The part taken by British miners in Britain's social progress is his own family history. Mr. Murray's serenity in the present critical moment for the American labor movement has almost a biological quality; it is something bred—and bred deeply—in his bones.

After the Atlantic City convention, a general opinion was that Mr. Murray, inheriting the wreckage of Mr. Lewis' endorsement of Mr. Willkie, would move cautiously. He would steer a delicate course between the positions taken by Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hillman. In my opinion, events will show that this badly misjudges Mr. Murray. Long before the Atlantic City convention, he was dissatisfied with the Roosevelt administration's defense preparations, felt that they were too largely in the hands of representatives of great corporations, that they gave too little voice to labor, that they gave no assurance of an adequate and speedy supply of military weapons. A few days ago he brought forward his own carefully worked-out program for the organization of each basic industry. His friends say that he will persistently demand, in the name of organized labor, that this program be adopted by the administration. According to his associates, his weapon will be facts, accurately set forth: he holds the terrible political weapon of being right.

JONATHAN MITCHELL

Defense and the Slave-Men

THIS IS the winter of our discontent. The massive effort we must now make to prepare for a war from which we have consistently kept our gaze, will shake our social frame until every potential weakness is revealed. In the end that is healthy for a nation, and in the end we shall come through. But the process is a grim one. And any number of us muff its meaning, including the big names in journalism. I wish, perhaps irrelevantly, that William Bolitho were alive. He could approach a topic by the most casual indirections yet somehow lay bare its marrow. Alone among the columnists of our time he had an untamed mind that avoided the snares of our everyday thought. I have been wondering what he would make of the current pother over labor and defense. That it is a convulsive question may be judged from its having sent all sorts of maggoty things crawling from the halls of Congress. I suppose I have by now read a hundred-odd pronouncements on it from columnists, editors, labor leaders, industrialists, politicians and other bigwigs. We have bandied pro-labor and anti-labor arguments back and forth until our minds have become prisoners in the grooves they have made.

Let us start with first things. There can be little doubt that in a war or "national defense" economy labor generally gets the run-around. Little hunchbacked

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Randolph Bourne used to say, during the First World War, that "war is the health of the state." He saw that the task of the ruling groups in maintaining their rule is always made easier in a war emergency. This is as true in England and America as in the Third Reich or the Soviet Union. It means merely that in war, if the economic and political systems are not to crack, they must move more closely together. The lords of the earth become more lordly, their commands more imperative. In the name of patriotism they declare they will brook no opposition.

It is rarely, however, in a democracy that these lords deliver their commands in their own voice. They have to use a sort of political ventriloquism and speak through puppets. James Wechsler ran last week in PM a remarkable series of interviews with the chief labor-baiters in Congress—Cox, Smith, Hoffman, Sumners. I shall not retraverse his ground. Even on their guard they revealed plenty. What was most interesting, however, was what was least sensational. For one thing, the labor-hatred of these men is an old story with them. The national-defense emergency is not the cause of their labor hatred: it is rather the instrument.

But it is a peculiarly effective instrument. And the reason is that modern war has become a war of factories. As the recognition of that sinks into the middle-class mind it bears a bitter fruit of opinion. In a war of factories, men reason, industrialists are the generals. Hence the strategic position of Knudsen, the flattery heaped on him, the most recent honor and power that are being accorded him as head of the proposed new defense super-board, although his ability as administrator is still a matter of faith, and not of record. Hence also the fantastic surrenders to Ford despite Hillman's protest. And in a war of factories, men reason again, workers are the soldiers. That is why the demand for decent wages and hours in the defense industries becomes to the middle-class mind sheer arrogance, collective bargaining becomes insubordination and the right to strike becomes treason.

Let us make no mistake: this sort of outlook can be a powerful and dangerous force in public opinion. When Mr. Knudsen speaks before the National Association of Manufacturers and complains of the "blackout" of industry from Friday to Monday, the effect on middle-class opinion may be to further the movement for the longer work-week without overtime pay. When the newspapers play up a Vultee or an Aluminum strike, and forget to mention that for two instances of production-stoppage in defense there have been hundreds of disputes settled without any stoppage, they are playing on a panic-sense whose source is the idea of workers as soldiers. And when Representative Ford of California gets up in the House and shouts that the CIO must be "abolished" and its leaders "put in concentration camps," he is not merely a congressional primitive. He is, knowingly or not, repeating on the American soil the strategy and outlook that have made out of the soil of Continental Europe one vast concentration camp.

Every worker, like every other citizen, must be a soldier in a battle against barbarism. But the barbarians are within the gates as well as outside. And to apply the techniques of militarism to the production of defense materials is to run a war in the fatally wrong way. France tried it and failed. Britain has learned that economic war requires economic techniques to be successful, and that when workers are offered a share in the organization of production and its control by the state, they become by that very fact better economic soldiers. It is as foolish to try to run labor relations by army methods as it would be to run an army by collective bargaining. Even from the military man's standpoint this is true. For he must recognize that war today is not only a war of factories: it is also a war of morale. Or better, it is a war of morale *because* it is a war of factories. And the problems of production-morale cannot be resolved by using tin-hat methods and hurling around the term "treason."

I will not even dignify the viewpoint of Representative Ford by calling it military. It is in the deepest sense feudal. It proceeds from the seigneurial attitude of corporate capitalism toward the serfs that compose its labor market: they must do the maximum of work with the minimum of expense and trouble. And it looks toward an even more restrictive society, in which—as under the Nazis—the workers are considered only as beasts of burden useful to the state. It is notable that Mr. Cox comes from Georgia, Mr. Smith from Virginia, Mr. Hoffman from Michigan, Mr. Sumners from Texas, Mr. Ford from California. These are all states with either an old tradition of slavery or a new tradition of industrial feudalism. To be sure, these men may be sincere and even benevolent. Willa Cather tells us, in her novel, "Sapphira and the Slave Girl," that Sapphira too was benevolent. The good intentions of labor-baiters do not affect the status of the slavemen.

I have said above that in a war period the economic and political systems must move more closely together. Our hope of heaven, like Britain's, lies in effecting that fusion not by making the state a vassal of business but by subjecting business to the control of the people. This must not and need not mean tyranny. It must mean, as Philip Murray has suggested, that we run our war industries by industrial councils in which management, labor and the government will each have a share. It may be some intimation of that which has caused Mr. Prentiss, in his speech to the NAM, to warn against war. It is just possible that the dog beneath the skin of the appeasement movement answers to the name of fear of democratic controls of business.

MAX LERNER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

Industry Committees

BENEATH heated discussions about the NDAC's failings, one sensible reform has already been made. This is the establishment by Mr. Sidney Hillman's Labor Division of two industry committees—for shipbuilding and aviation—composed of spokesmen for the CIO, the AFL, the employers and the government. Mr. Morris L. Cooke, of Mr. Hillman's division, is chairman of the shipbuilding committee.

The advantage of these committees is that they give the men most closely concerned with defense production a chance to settle problems themselves, on the spot, without time-consuming, often bewildering journeys to Washington. The committees are so formed that organized labor has an adequate voice in whatever decisions are taken, which is emphatically not true within the NDAC. So far, the shipbuilding committee—properly the Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee—has tackled the question of workers who, after a brief interval in one shipyard, throw up their jobs to find work in another shipyard. The labor turnover in shipbuilding has been higher than it should have been. The committee found, as you might have expected, that the primary reason that workers have been changing jobs is because labor is better treated in some yards than others. Accordingly, the committee is now engaged in trying to equalize wage rates and working conditions in each of the principal shipbuilding regions of the country.

These committees are, however, considerably less ambitious than those envisaged by Mr. Philip Murray, the CIO's new head. The Hillman committees, in the nature of the case, cannot trespass on the functions of the NDAC. Under Mr. Murray's plans, the industry committees would make the NDAC partly supererogatory. Right now, England's greatest need is for war planes, and the squeeze in aviation —or at least one of them—is machine tools. As Mr. Murray sees it, the proper officials of the government would inform the machine-tool-industry committee of what the need was. The industry committee, which would be composed equally of employers and union men, with government and consumer representatives, would thereupon undertake to draft a program. Take the problem of subcontracting, on which Mr. Knudsen has recently placed great emphasis. The employer and union members of the committee would know instantly where to find possible subcontractors. And so with all other problems.

An administrative hierarchy for defense is necessarily a complicated affair. There is no space here to compare the NDAC, as it is now, with Mr. Murray's ideal. But two crucial differences may be noted. Under the NDAC, defense planning is done in Washington. Washington decides what companies will receive contracts, and on what terms. In certain industries, Mr. Murray claims, defense contracts have so far gone to a handful of major companies. Smaller concerns are even today operating half-time, with workers unemployed. Under Mr. Murray's proposal, after the administration had determined on lump-sum requirements, the remainder of the planning would be done by committees within each industry. In these committees, smaller companies and union spokesmen for jobless workers would be able to make themselves heard. The second great difference between the NDAC and Mr. Murray's scheme is that labor would have effective equality with ownership.

Perhaps the most valuable, far-sighted exploration of Mr. Knudsen's subcontracting problem yet actually accomplished is that of Mr. Hillman's Labor Division. Under its auspices, what amounts to an inventory of the industrial resources of Ohio towns has been completed. Communities of other states are being encouraged to do likewise. Such inventories reveal "stranded" towns, or stranded industries within prosperous towns. These towns and industries ought to be fitted into the defense programs; Mr. Hillman's division is sending their names and locations to the NDAC's prime contractors. Here is at least a partial substitute for the work Mr. Murray's industry committees might do.

In the opinion of observers, Mr. Willkie's recent trips to Washington and New York turned out to be a political wake, in which Mr. Willkie served as the uncomprehending remains. It is just conceivable that his Willkie clubs—now the Independent clubs—may become a pressure bloc of a new and dangerous type. But of his authority and prestige within the Republican Party, Mr. Willkie has now been stripped reasonably clean. He has had the most precipitous fall of any man in recent political history.

His mistake has been to launch a fight over the Republican national chairmanship without having sufficient resources to win it. In Washington and New York, he made it clear that he wanted to name the chairman, who, of course, was to be a "progressive." This made the ears of the supporters of Messrs. Taft, Dewey, Vandenberg and other 1944 hopefuls twitch violently, and a grim anti-Willkie bloc came into existence overnight.

Mr. Willkie hooked the Republican nomination last June with remarkably scant organization support. He had behind him Mr. Sam Pryor's Connecticut group, Governor Stassen's Minnesota group, and, as individuals, lean, windswept Frank Horton of Saddlestring, Wyoming, and pint-sized, sardonic Charlie Halleck of Indiana. And, finally, Mr. Kenneth Simpson of his own New York City. Governor Stassen is now a 1944 candidate on his own, and Mr. Simpson has received a beating at the hands of District Attorney Dewey. The residue of Mr. Willkie's forces aren't sufficient for a full-dress party fight.

Mr. Simpson's defeat, on the issue of cleanliness and efficiency in the New York City Board of Elections, is believed here to have national importance. Many observers think that it makes Mr. Dewey once more the Republican Party's white hope—the position from which Mr. Willkie dislodged him. During last fall's campaign, Mr. Dewey seems to have made innumerable friends for himself, whether or not he made Willkie votes. Party members in and out of Congress say ecstatically that he was "game," that he remained religiously aloof from the factional squabbles that interlaced the campaign. Trivia of this kind may seem unrelated to the present world crisis; nevertheless, you may expect to see the Republican Party's actions in Congress shaped, in part, by Mr. Dewey's needs.

Washington T. R. B.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Old-Fashioned Way

WOOLCHESTER COWPERTHWAITE FIELDS is among the great one-man shows. He has been able to write his name in lights since before the incandescent bulb was invented, and within his own special province he is still the funniest fraud who ever pitched them into the aisles from laughter. He started with a line of chatter and some balls and cigar boxes, which he juggled with a snore of comment and defiance of the laws of gravity, which quickly established him as a character, which character he gradually filled out to the full limits of burlesque and vaudeville and Follies skits. Since then the movies were invented and a form for them gradually developed. But nobody told him about this new invention; nobody was able. He made movie shorts of course, and they were wonderful; he did skits in feature pictures and they were wonderful too. But movies as something different he never heard of. They grew up and he never found out which shell the pea was under, because he couldn't be bothered: that was just a rival pitch. This way, folks, test your skill, etc.

Biographers of The Incomparable, the Marvel of the Aged in Wood, will, I am sure, find it in the record that he was not only a bad boy in school but they had to change the numbers on the rooms to get him from one grade to the other. And that when he was kidnaped from upper third at the age of fourteen by a passing minstrel show he was already very unruly and set in his ways. That learning was the other fellow's game, and being a born pitch-man he would never be a sucker for it; but that when he played he played for keeps. That when movies came along he took a look at his first camera and said, Why I can lick that, easiest thing in the world, yes—did you note what I did to them at the Palace by any chance? (You did, eh. . . .) And that even after he had got himself blackballed in every producer's office on the Coast, his firm belief was that any wheeze routine could be extended by gags and names like Throttlebottom to what the rest of the world was beginning to know as a modern film comedy.

He still believes it. His new movie was written by him and mostly directed by him and then stolen by him in the principal part. It is called "Bank Dick" and it shows Fields in the uniform of a detective and all-around door man for the local bank (he was given the job as a reward, under the severest misapprehension). He gets into trouble as nobody else can, and gets out the same way; he is the harried man of family and emperor of the world, his address and resource are infinite except when approaching a simple flight of steps, he is fastidious to the high point of using his chaser for a finger bowl, he is dignity with a red nose, and courtly, and he has never truckled to any man, which would naturally not include small boys and his own shadow —which if it ever moves back a step he will make like he is going to wring its neck. He is W. C. Fields, which is a considerable sort of thing to be, and purely a joy to watch. But that is all the movie is about.

When the man is funny he is terrific, but in between the high points—and they are as good in stage device as in line and in character conception—what is the audience doing? The story is makeshift, the other characters are stock types, the only pace discernible is in the distance between drinks or the rhythm of the fleeting seconds it takes Fields to size up trouble coming and duck to hell out. The audience is asleep because this was never made as a picture. It is stiff and static and holds no interest outside of W. C. Fields—you don't care what happens to anybody else, you don't care what the outcome; you forget immediately if there was any. Today there are no one-man shows in good pictures, unless the man is a director, and even then he must have a script and people to work with. Today we ask that even such a genius of character act as W. C. Fields be built-in, and that the structure as a whole amount to something, however light or little.

I hoped once that he would some day be content not to run the whole show in his own way, and let someone write him into and direct him through a story infinitely more absorbing than anything he has ever done. It would be the story of one of the world's deathless fools, a snide and bulbous sort of man who knew the top from the bottom, having been on both; a man who could make a comeback and throw it away and make another, a man getting old and very sick, and still coming back to damn all and do it his way, with his legs weak and his face changed to puffy, still talking through his nose like a bugle and still touching here and there the springs of human laughter. In this dream story you could even call the character Throttlebottom, though we would know who he is; and though we don't know the end, you could make one that would bring home not only what a joy he has been, to the hearts of his countrymen, but how dear. The end would be that he made a picture called "Bank Dick" in which he was a good part of his old and indomitable self, and which he was fully himself in writing, directing, acting and atmosphering in the face of almost everything that ever happened in the movies. He was W. C. Fields in it, the trouper of all troupers once again. And the picture opened in Brooklyn.

In a meeting last week the committee on exceptional photoplays, National Board of Review, voted the following pictures the best of the year: "The Grapes of Wrath," "The Great Dictator," "Of Mice and Men," "Our Town," "Fantasia," "The Long Voyage Home," "Foreign Correspondent," "The Biscuit Eater," "Gone with the Wind," "Rebecca"—in that order. I was sorry "The Shop Around the Corner" and "Pinocchio" did not get on, in place of the last two films, which hardly make the good category, let alone the best; and the order wouldn't be exactly mine. But many elaborate duds and empty pageants which will show on other lists were expunged, and "The Grapes of Wrath" was the best picture of this year and many others.

Picking pictures is an exciting and on the whole harmless sport, but I wish there were some means of counteracting the human error inevitable in the tricks memory and mental revision will play: the picture seen twelve months ago will not be remembered so vividly as the picture released last week—which in turn may not be remembered at all twelve months from now. Or the older one may have already become sainted, which is a damned state of affairs, but it happens. Who will now make a list of the ten best of 1930, and who on the other hand will read it?

OTIS FERGUSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Bandwagon

France was defeated because her people lacked the discipline that comes with the observance of Sunday, and Great Britain has withstood attack because the British observe the Sabbath, the Rev. John A. McKay, president of the Princeton Theological Seminary, declared yesterday at a meeting of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States. – *News item in The New York Times.*

As a most successful poodle year draws to a close it must be a great satisfaction to all our breed enthusiasts to realize how much our common interest has been advanced during 1940 by the growth of a very real accord and understanding among the poodle people. – *Mrs. Sherman R. Hoyt, Secretary, Interstate Poodle Club, in The American Kennel Gazette.*

Professor Bernhard Ostrolenk of the School of Business and Civic Administration at City College concluded from extensive research yesterday that "poverty in the United States is psychic."

"Actually, people have more goods and services than at any time before," he said. "They merely imagine they are poorer." –*A. P. dispatch from New York in The Christian Science Monitor.*

FDRührer

In his speech to German munition workers on Tuesday, Herr Hitler revealed himself once again as a good New Dealer. It is not true, of course, that Mr. Roosevelt and Herr Hitler are in agreement at all points. Thus, Herr Hitler believes in German hegemony whereas Mr. Roosevelt believes in Anglo-American hegemony, but their economic views are strikingly parallel and they hold fundamental political and social opinions and prejudices in common. – *From an editorial in The Chicago Daily Tribune.*

My Blue Heaven

When a shell bursts in moisture-laden sunlight after rain, soldiers usually are treated to a small rainbow. – *Item in The Detroit News.*

Boo!

Ladies like lace . . . and so do Laddies. Gentlemen, we give you "Insomnia," the Noel nightie. Black lace, with the added lure of black or flesh-colored silk and rayon chiffon here and there. It's daring, it's scaring . . . but it's wonderful. – *Advertisement of Oppenheim Collins in The New York Times.*

O-Volunteers Department

Nevertheless, when he really needs them, Uncle Sam doesn't have much trouble getting soldiers. Sometimes it takes a bit of conscription to overcome the inertia and to fill up the ranks fast enough. But when a war or an emergency has been declared by this country, and the army's mobilized, it can always be said that the mobilization is the act of the American people, and that the army is, in essence, a VOLUNTEER army.

That's Democracy! – *From a column by Major Alfred Connor Bowman in Radio Life.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Too Many Farms?

SIR: Your hymn to industrialism, "Standards of Living and of Life" (December 9), contains the usual urban refrain that rural living is synonymous with misery and poverty. Of course there are rural slums, but they are the result of exploitative one-crop farming or the use of submarginal land. This can no more be taken as a medium of measurement of rural life than slum districts of the city. Minnesotans, reading your summary of rural life as the place where "Men, women and children starve . . . in silence and out of sight," and where "self-sufficiency is rare and is achieved only by appalling sacrifices," can only conclude that no one is more provincial than a New Yorker.

A more serious objection is the false dichotomy which you set up between agriculture and industry. Why must it be one at the expense of the other? Let there be an increase of industry, but let the industries be decentralized so the workers may also live semi-rural lives and operate homesteads. Working but thirty-three hours a week in the factory, they would have sufficient time to grow much of their own food—which would leave those employed in the food-processing industries free for "tasks other than producing the absolute necessities of life." Misery and poverty of the body are less disastrous than misery and poverty of the spirit. Hitler may well achieve such a future as your editorial envisions: a highly industrialized nation with mechanized farming, with physical security for all, and with a generous supply of social and leisure services. What is lacking? Freedom and responsibility.

The Founding Fathers of this nation were much more concerned with the latter than with the chance of building an industrial country. All of them except Hamilton were agreed that the one great requirement for democratic government was widespread ownership of private property, and by property they meant real property, chiefly land. The reason is clear. Ownership alone gives the average man economic security and independence and a sense of responsibility.

Collegeville, Minn. EMERSON HYNES

SIR: Your conclusion that the more farmers, the lower the level of civilization, may be true for China or Rumania, but what about Denmark and Holland, where the farming is geared to a high plane of intelligence and training? The fault lies not with the number of farmers but rather with the number of ignorant and backward farmers.

It is stated, and truly, that fifty millions of our people are undernourished and that the worst are among the farm families themselves. Does not that call for better farming and the more adequate distribution of farm products rather than a drive away from the land? The citrus people of Texas, Florida and California are worried about their millions of boxes that cannot be exported on account of the war. Are we all eating too many oranges for our health and enjoyment? Every day brings me medical reports and statistics proving that our national diet is far too low in vitamin C. And the drug houses are pouring out tons of the synthetic substitute. One extra orange a week per person would cure the headache of our grapefruit and orange-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

growers, give them a better market right here at home and save us millions now spent on newfangled pills and potions.

It is no panacea for country slums to transport the rural inhabitants to already overcrowded cities or to create new congested centers of population. Good housing must come to the country. There is the backbone of our nation. You can provide no healthier, no more wholesome or more educationally effective playground for children than the gardens, fields and pastures of the farm. The best you have to offer in the city is but a poor imitation, despite all the costly fixings.

Industry too must come to the land. The Germans are demonstrating that a vast variety of machine parts, even the most delicate, can be produced in tiny villages and hamlets.

Sweet Briar, Va. JOSEPH KRIMSKY

[It is hard to believe that Mr. Hynes read the article he criticizes; his letter bears almost no relation to our article, which was not arguing for industry instead of agriculture, but for better standards for both. We agree with Mr. Krimsky that it is no panacea for country slums to transport rural inhabitants to overcrowded cities; we never said it was. – THE EDITORS]

Revolution and Roosevelt

SIR: In your editorial (November 25) describing the substance of Harold Laski's latest book you commit what I consider a grave dishonesty. I refer to the use of the word "revolutionary." It has become the common property now of the liberals. They are not so gross as to say this is a revolutionary war; it is not so easy a word to use as "democracy" was in 1917. But it is just as misleading.

In England the Bevins and Laskis are deceiving the English people with this hope of "fulfilling the revolution inherent in democracy." "Revolution" has nothing in common with the Churchill government or the Roosevelt administration. "Revolution" and "overthrow" have nothing in common with "pleading with the privileged classes." You can't talk about "fundamental changes" and vote for Roosevelt; you can't call for the "dynamic of the masses" and attack John L. Lewis (I don't mean on the Willkie issue) and praise Sidney Hillman; you can't tell the British people they have a chance to take their government and applaud Churchill.

New York City D. W. N.

SIR: I wonder if you realize how much your election took first place in our thoughts? On Tuesday night, there were the four of us here sitting up late and talking, all of us left-wingers, who would normally vote socialist—or possibly even beyond that. We felt that if Roosevelt came in, he would come, not as a Democrat —no European is really able to understand American official parties!—but as a New Dealer, *un homme de bonne volonté*, a willing collaborator with all of us in a new kind of society. If his opponent had got in, it mightn't have made any difference to things like more destroyers and airplanes, but he might have intervened only in order to save Europe for capitalism; then all would have been to do again in another twenty years.

We were depressed by one or two things, including what seems to me the unpardonable stupidity of imprisoning Nehru, one of the few really great men alive today. We were anxious about Greece, anxious about London; we wanted some good news. I was so worried about this election that I had nightmares, and came down from them to listen to the early news; it was still black-out time, for nights are long here in the north. I was afraid to listen, almost, and when it came I was so delighted that I didn't bother to go on listening to air-raid news. As I told the others, everyone began to be cheerful; my small girl began jumping about. It seemed like something good at last; people went about this remote village talking about it. We wait now for the beginning of the results.

Campletown, Argyll, Scotland NAOMI MITCHISON

Correction from Harvard

SIR: In a communication printed last year (November 29, 1939) in your esteemed journal, Irwin Ross misinterpreted the situation in Harvard through acting prematurely on the basis of incomplete information. In his article in this year's New Republic ("The Campus Autocrats," December 2), Mr. Ross again misrepresents the situation, this time through not being abreast of the news. He says:

> Now they [the professors in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences] are investigating relations between faculty and administration, which may very well result in changing the governing policy of the university. Two committees are at work, an official faculty committee and an extra-curricular group under the aegis of the Teachers' Union and the AAUP. Their work bears watching by the entire educational community.

The facts are that action taken by the faculty last academic year registered the judgment that the channels of communication between the faculty and the administration were altogether satisfactory as they existed at the time. The official faculty committee completed its work last April-May and was discharged. Accordingly, it no longer exists. The same is true of the extra-curricular group under the aegis of the Teachers' Union and the AAUP. It too got its hearing in the faculty last year and went out of existence.

W. S. FERGUSON,

Cambridge, Mass. Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

[The fault must be shared between The New Republic and Mr. Ross. We were unable to print his article promptly, the situation changed in the interval, and the statement was not brought up to date. – THE EDITORS]

The Massachusetts Mind

SIR: I have read every word of your rag for the past ten years and I still don't like you. In spite of the fact that you are usually 100-percent right in what you do say, you are still more biased than any release from the Republican National Committee. Can you figure that out or shall I send you a diagram?

Lexington, Mass. RALPH A. NASON

London Night

[The following material is quoted from a private letter written by an Air Raid Protection warden in London and is published for the vivid picture it gives of an air-raid scene. – THE EDITORS]

I had just finished supper (rather late for nowadays) and was coming down the [censored] when one of the enemy bombers overhead began to make a loud and at the same time deliberate broody noise which made me suspect that it was about to lay eggs. Sure enough, almost as soon as I had got in between two strongish-looking buildings, a loud roaring swish began and there was a considerable explosion, accompanied by a good deal of small debris falling on and around me as I lay, by this time flat on the pavement, with my warden's hat on and my felt hat in my hand.

I went through to the six cottages on which the bomb had fallen. There was a family trapped in the end one and the rescue parties were getting down to the job. At first the impression had been one of chaos—buildings and their contents just strewn and heaped about, and a handful of tin-hatted men

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and women with a few vehicles moving about or standing in clusters dealing with the easier effects, but apparently helpless in front of this mountain of rubble. But now someone had heard a woman calling for help underneath: spade and tackle were mobilized and soon we had located a man, woman and girl all alone far below the surface. Rescue parties slowly dug away the earth, lifted the bricks into baskets, and made a crater at the edge of which were the buried people. The woman kept shouting that she could not bear it, that we could easily pull her out if we tried: at last a nurse wriggled under and gave her morphia at the expense of apparently cracking one of her own ribs.

Every time the raiders came right overhead again as they did every few minutes, someone would call for the already heavily dimmed torches to be put out, and the barrage would get loud and close. At last we unearthed a man's foot with a sock on it and by degrees in two and a half hours the three were got out and given hot drinks on their stretchers and carried very carefully by a special path, from which we removed all the stumbling blocks, out to the waiting ambulances.

It was now raining hard. There was a certain amount of cursing, especially when some insisted on the lights being put out, and others called back that they were not bloody cats; but on the whole tempers were good, and people like the nurse who insisted on seeing the job through with her cracked rib were remarkably calm and casual in their manner. At intervals other bombs fell, but no more near us.

When the mother who had been screaming was got out, her first words were to thank us all, and her second to make sure her daughter and husband were out. They talked to one another quite calmly on their stretchers before being taken away.

Now these are experiences which have come to several thousand Londoners, and yet the attitude to them is getting steadily more balanced and confident. The curious thing is the way it is all given a status of normality, not by some sort of neurotic adaptation but by embracing it into the English social pattern, just as if the Bishop's wife were to have Gandhi and Harry Pollitt and the local pawnbroker to tea and did it as the most natural thing in the world.

The idea that bombs are terrifying and intolerable is therefore submerged in this very strong insistence on treating them as a rather special but quite normal and accepted institution of a sort no one expects to enjoy much, like a flower show where it always rains and everyone knows it always will. So instead of the bomb destroying the civilization the civilization practically destroys the bomb: Well, all but.

London M. N.

Union Then

SIR: Julian Huxley's article (The New Republic, November 18) about the possibility of forming an air force, international in spirit, ought to be supplemented by a statement that the New Commonwealth Society (Horseferry House, Horseferry Road, London, S. W. 1) and the New Commonwealth Institute have worked out in detail over the past seven years ways and means of organizing such an air force in the service of international authority. This organization, despite the blitzkrieg, is still active in Great Britain, and it is unfortunate that the enthusiasm-provoking qualities of more far-reaching proposals have blotted out its work here. It may be that some such scheme as that which Huxley and the New Commonwealth suggest will prove to be the furthest we can go, after the war is over, toward the ultimate goal of union. The greater the number of proposals currently known and advocated the more likely that there will be one acceptable and familiar which will fit the needs and the possibilities of the moment when peace is made.

New York City LEWIS A. DEXTER

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Some little bloodshed in the poet's corner this week. Allan Anderson, of Montreal, Quebec, swung at the poem "Subway" (December 16) with fourteen lines of his own, beginning thus:

To Mr. Oscar Williams:
Brother, take another train.
The seat you now are sitting on was heated by Hart Crane. . . .

Mr. MacNeice is Mr. Anderson's idea of a poet, says Mr. Anderson.

John G. Conley of Boston is John G. Conley's idea of a poet, says Mr. Conley. "I abominate *all* your poetry and suggest that you raise the cultural level of your magazine by the publication of my verse, which shows a deftness of style and a genuine feeling for the subject." Two John G. Conley poems were enclosed. We were backing this man, but no luck; his verse had feeling but was not so deft.

"It is strange," says Mary L. Hackberry, of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, "that a magazine that is a weekly protest against violence and prejudice, should employ a verbal slugger as a critic of poetry. I refer to Randall Jarrell ('Poets: Old, New and Aging,' The New Republic, December 9). A long boo to Mr. Jarrell from me."

And in the other corner, Bernard C. Clausen, Pittsburgh: "Please thank Randall Jarrell for the most stimulating hour I have received from The New Republic during recent years. The whole issue of December 9 seems to me to mark a new high level of literary quality which brought me keen delight."

The editorial in that issue has stimulated a group of supporters of the Highlander Folk School to plan a benefit for the school at Mecca Temple, New York City, on Sunday night, January 12. Tickets for Marc Blitzstein's "No for an Answer," which will be playing there, can be obtained from Mrs. Bernard J. Reis, 315 Central Park West, New York City, for $3.30 and $5.50. Net proceeds from the sale of a block of tickets will go to the Highlander School.

Berks County Civil Liberties Committee needs funds to combat the extraordinary arrests of people who signed nominating petitions for a Communist candidate for Congress. The Rev. Max C. Putney, chairman and treasurer of the committee, 742 North Thirteenth Street, Reading, Pennsylvania, who was himself arrested on a charge of "conspiracy," is an old New Republic reader and remarks that "it is quite an experience to be involved in a case of persecution oneself."

Labor Education Service, the address of which is 437 West Fifty-ninth Street, New York City, announces a class on the American labor movement for persons from Europe, to help them become part of its activities and to feel at home in its daily life and practices. A nominal registration fee of 50 cents is charged.

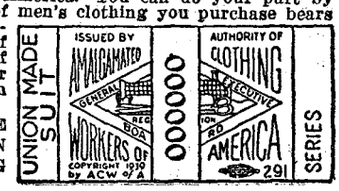
AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS of AMERICA

"That's my Union"

250,000 organized clothing workers are proud of the union that has banished the sweatshop from the men's clothing industry.

The nation's clothing workers deserve your support in their fight to keep the sweatshop out of America. You can do your part by demanding that every article of men's clothing you purchase bears the union label of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America — your guarantee of clothing manufactured under fair labor standards, by skilled union craftsmen.

DEMAND THE AMALGAMATED LABEL ON ALL MEN'S CLOTHING



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

A Pro-Tory Tract

OF "OLIVER WISWELL"[1] it should be said somewhere, and directly, that it is poor as history and weak as a novel. It is on the best-seller lists, and high; and therein lies its chief importance. For, what with the nervous bravos of the reviewers, and Kenneth Roberts' reputation for dogged spadework, it becomes a text as well as a yarn, and so a cultural influence to reckon with.

This, actually, is Roberts' first attempt to grapple with something beyond the trappings and the sure-fire action of American history. The reader lure is no on-the-spot historical figure carefully delineated, his footsteps dogged with great gusto and a researcher's jealous care ("Rabble in Arms," "Northwest Passage"). "Oliver Wiswell" is a forthright attempt to highlight the entire course of the American Revolutionary War from the Loyalist, or Tory, standpoint. It is a viewpoint that has wanted weighing in fiction and in the schoolbooks, too. Yet, provocative as it is here as a frontal assault on the DAR, ancestor-worship approach to the Revolution, it seldom, as fiction, gets beyond the effectiveness of a Tory broadside and surely lies no closer to the main sense of history.

The scope of the book is tremendous as to both time and geography, starting with the day before Lexington and Concord and going beyond the peace to the Loyalist exodus; the scene of action is variously Boston, Halifax, New York, England, France, the Western frontier, the South, Canada again, etc., etc. But the underlying scheme is simple, fundamentally even naïve. Oliver Wiswell, the young Loyalist who tells the story, personifies the Tory attitude toward the war. He agrees that England has treated the colonies badly, but is against a resort to arms. Above all, America must remain within the Empire. He sees the rebellion as the work of a vicious minority which has seized control through mob rule. All decent Americans are loyal to King George and Parliament, but the Patriots are the very dregs of humanity, poor, shiftless, diseased and uniformly pockmarked. What is more, they are cowards who can't and won't fight. Congress? A pack of knaves and incompetent malcontents. Wiswell rightly recognizes the Revolution as a civil war running concurrently with the rebellion. And if the unspeakable rabble finally succeeds, it is because the British are as stupid as the rebels are cowardly. The near-traitorous politics of the English leaders, the low caliber of the British generals and their failure to protect and utilize the American Tories, give victory to the Americans even as their armies scatter and run. So, caught between the millstones of British neglect and Patriot persecution, the Tories are forced to migrate *en masse* to Canada and start life anew.

Unquestionably there must have been hundreds of thousands of Americans who more or less felt that way about the American Revolution, and in the inevitable conflict there is probably available the stuff of great historical fiction. But Roberts has failed his material badly in many ways. First, through his very method. He has never known how to hold a book together, but the business of plugging a thesis with a vehemence that sometimes approaches hysteria has increased his normal difficulties. "Oliver Wiswell" is simply a huge string of events, big and little, which have been selected and shaped to prove the Loyalist case. Everything is seen through the eyes of Oliver, who is purportedly writing a true history of the war. Oliver is literally everywhere, usually as a secret agent for the British command, and the devices used by Roberts to shift him to wherever HISTORY is really popping actually fall short of the average of invention in the pulp magazines. If it's a battle, Oliver manages to be perched on a hill and so sees the action unfold as in a pageant. Where a hill is clearly unavailable, as in the siege of Ninety Six, a high platform is erected as a gun emplacement, with Oliver right on top. Those convenient and recurrent hills become a little trying; but the device gives Roberts a chance to exercise his genuine talent for describing large-scale action. These sections (on the battles of Bunker Hill, Long Island, etc.) are by all odds the best in the book. Roberts has few superiors in handling large masses of men deployed over extensive terrain, or a siege, or an army on the march.

The arbitrary method of keeping Oliver on the go and face to face with HISTORY results in all sorts of serious story weaknesses. Central characters are simply pushed around to keep them geared to Oliver. At one point most of them come together in Paris, Mr. Roberts having simply decreed that they attach themselves to the British spy system. The entire European episode, designed to prove the ineptitude of London, is mercilessly long, repetitious and unconvincing, and might better have been omitted. I suspect that the love story was as much of a nuisance to Roberts as it is to the reader. Faithful Sally, back home near Boston with her Patriot family, has to be projected through letters, and the entire affair is so obviously a surrender to formula, happy ending and all, that it leaves the reader a little embarrassed. But if Sally is a girl on a calendar, Oliver himself is little better. He does Roberts' talking so faithfully that one is frequently apt to forget about Oliver himself. At best he achieves the level of a faithful male secretary who has learned to talk like an eighteenth-century Herbert Hoover, so that on the few occasions when we see him in vigorous action, he seems wholly out of character. Generally speaking, Roberts does much better in bringing his historical characters to life. Generals Howe, Clinton and Arnold are quite convincing, as far as they go, but that can't be said of any of the purely fictional people. Like Buell, Oliver's picaresque companion, who is an out-and-out superman, they are largely stock figures put to stock uses.

If we regard "Oliver Wiswell" as history, it is unquestionably the uncommon Tory bias (which will, as the case may be, confuse or irritate or secretly exalt) that consti-

[1] Oliver Wiswell, by Kenneth Roberts. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 836 pages. $3.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tutes the core of the book. I think, in fact, that it is legitimate to eliminate a lot of reviewer's shadow-boxing by reading Kenneth Roberts for Oliver Wiswell. It seems clear that the author has hand-picked his history, loaded his research dice to roll a Tory seven every time. He escapes the major responsibility of the honest historian in fiction by sketching only heroes and villains and refusing to deal with causes. The civil war that he sets down as mob-against-order was really a social revolution. The set-up that Oliver admired and saw threatened was simply the repressive social scheme transferred from old England and worn thin after more than a hundred and fifty years. Roberts lines up on the side of the De Lanceys and the Crugers, powerful aristocrats who fought to perpetuate a feudal system protected by English law. In fact, John Cruger is one of the book's heroes. Oliver-Roberts is for him, because he has the highest social standing in America, means "more extensive than that of many a European prince," and what Oliver calls "extraordinary sympathy."

Altogether too much emphasis is laid on the part played by Patriot mobs. America was then overwhelmingly agricultural, with perhaps a half-dozen towns having populations over 5,000. To play up the few relatively unimportant city hoodlums is to obscure the essential picture; to overlook entirely, as Roberts does, the agrarian revolt which was kept alive by the ordinary small farmer, seriously distorts the truth. Civil war is the ugliest kind of war, and hundreds of crimes were committed by rebels and Tories alike. Roberts' effort to make angels of the Tories simply doesn't square with history.

No revolution remains very long in the control of those who fathered it; and a historical novelist who deals with one surely ought to weigh its results before adopting a thesis. The American Revolution loosed forces that brought about here and elsewhere tremendous advances in the direction of democracy. In this process, it is perfectly true that a great deal of special privilege was destroyed; it may be that Roberts is irked, not merely by the character of the attack, but by the democratic results themselves. The bias in "Oliver Wiswell" becomes more understandable after one has read his sugar-coated little book in praise of Calvin Coolidge, or the stream of strongly conservative articles printed over a period of years in The Saturday Evening Post, or the inept one-act play in which he lashes out frantically at the Russian Revolution. Perhaps, though, the most fruitful clue lies in these words spoken by one of the Tories in his novel: "We are the people who have land, belongings, position, and we're standing by our guns in opposition to the people who have nothing." MAX GISSEN

Seasonal, Very Simple

So softly by the shaded ways
Tall in the still autumnal haze
  Moving without a sound
  Over the fallow ground

Pomona came, and from the wood
  Whose dark-green laurels were
Older than summer's ruin, stood
  Vertumnus, watching her.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

If We Had Some Eggs

Hamlet, by Henry Miller and Michael Fraenkel. New York: Carrefour. 223 pages. $3.
The Expense of Greatness, by R. P. Blackmur. New York: Arrow Editions. 305 pages. $3.

THE FIGURE of Hamlet, out of joint with his time and place, sicklied o'er with self-consciousness, continues to serve as culture-hero of the myths which the modern intellectual has created around himself. The attractions and pitfalls of the part are still there; even Joyce gave a rather strained and melodramatic performance. The Miller and Fraenkel revival is easygoing and farcical; they are not the men to resist an attraction or avoid a pitfall. Having decided, in a Paris café five years ago, to rewrite some badly written story, they seriously considered "The Merry Widow," but finally gravitated to the melancholy prince. The subject was not important, anyway; their real object was to produce a thousand pages, "not one more, not one less." The relative length of the present volume may be taken as their own measure of success.

This particular two-faced "Hamlet" is not so pedantic as Jules Laforgue's, nor so fantastic as Dover Wilson's, but he is a more resonant mouthpiece than, let us say, Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald. As for Shakespeare, he was—in Mr. Miller's balanced phrase—"a great fraud." And Mr. Miller, by the time this correspondence is concluded, and against his correspondent's advice, has read the play. In these letters, even more than in his "Tropic of Cancer," Mr. Miller seems to be prostituting his gifts as a pornographer to his ambitions as a critic and a philosopher. Mr. Fraenkel, assuming the role of the first grave-digger, contributes, among less amusing letters, a rousing circular to undertakers, advertising his "Bastard Death." But there is never a meeting of minds. Mr. Fraenkel always wants to talk about Mr. Fraenkel, and Mr. Miller is perennially fascinated by the subject of Mr. Miller. Instead of dialogue, we have competing soliloquies.

"Only personal biography remains," . . . insists Mr. Fraenkel. "The modern artist constantly writes and rewrites the Hamlet that's in him." Consciousness is a disease, a disease from which Mr. Miller does not appear to be suffering very acutely, and thus the precept of our first grave-digger and the example of our second drift in an obscurantist direction. Neither seems to realize what grave they are digging. "We have to rediscover once more subjective man." In such shrill manifestos there is an untimely and elegiac note. Already their book is a period piece of quaint old *rive-gaucherie*. Of making books about what it feels like to be an artist, and novels about the novel I want to write, and critiques about the writer who expresses my private feelings most intimately, the end is at last in sight. There is, of course, no logical limit; but, like the label on the box of Quaker Oats, there is a vanishing point. That way paranoia lies.

The soliloquies of R. P. Blackmur, on the other hand, demand and deserve to be taken more seriously than the mere antics of grave-diggers. Like Hamlet, he is not trying to evade problems, but to handle too many at the same time. He has no wish to be Prince Hamlet, but remains an attendant lord, with the meticulosity and the high sentence,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

if not the other qualities of Eliot's hero. Almost, at times, an Osric. Mr. Blackmur's double point of reference is best indicated by the subtitle of his earlier volume, "Essays in Craft and Elucidation." As a specialist in craft, he has distinguished himself by his devotion to his task, by the good will with which he accords to contemporary writers—particularly poets—the kind of sympathetic reading and detailed discussion that they all too seldom receive. As an oracle of elucidation, however, the only thing upon which he manages to throw much light is the significance of the Miltonic phrase, "darkness visible."

Unhappily, in this new collection of articles and reviews, mainly reprinted from the quarterlies, there is less emphasis on craft and more on Mr. Blackmur's special sort of elucidation. Among the various new doorsteps on which he solemnly eviscerates himself are those of Yeats, Hardy, Melville, Emily Dickinson, Henry Adams and T. E. Lawrence. Here and there, when he is reducing Hardy's lyrics to formula or taking the inventory of Emily Dickinson's vocabulary, his criticism is workmanlike and helpful. But, generally speaking, his poet's eye rolls farther and farther away from the object. Often, when you expect a comment to explain a quotation, you find that you must go back to the quotation to find an explanation for his comment. When he is reviewing batches of new verse or fiction, it is hard to tell the different items apart on the basis of his descriptions. And it is impossible to tell, from his account of Lawrence's "Mint," whether or not he has read the book.

Though Mr. Blackmur's problems are ultimately reducible to the problem of style, that does not make them less complicated. Rather, it raises a further problem. How far can we afford to trust a putative critic—the adjective is Mr. Blackmur's—whose control of language is so uncertain? Far more distracting than his home-made conceptual apparatus or his airy way of referring to writers with whom he is obviously unfamiliar are his characteristic verbalisms: a fondness for onomatopoetic suggestion, a deliberate cultivation of the malapropism, a tendency to fall victim to his own metaphors; epigrams that fizzle, paradoxes that turn out to be merely contradictions, desperate efforts to achieve a platitude. Mr. Blackmur has a dictionary, but perhaps that is the trouble. He calls it "that palace of saltatory heuristics." You visualize him thumbing his way through the palace, discovering "heuristic" and jumping at "saltator."

Look, for you cannot avoid it, at the word "sensibility." It meets you on almost every page—not less conspicuously in such compounds as "bottom sensibility"—and is scarcely used twice in the same way. Mr. Blackmur evidently means to extend what he calls "the limiting factor of subjectivity," to take in all the area of connotation between taste and technique, between the writer's complexes and the reader's responses. He damns Hardy, in the very phrase that Eliot used to praise Henry James, for having "violated his sensibility with ideas." Now Eliot was simply expressing a distrust of didacticism; Mr. Blackmur's distrust of reason in art is more fundamental. Sensibility, as a criterion, is necessarily subjective and passive. It proposes to deal with a man of action like Lawrence by the sheer impressionistic savor of his random sentences. It hails the university as a solution to the maladjustments of the artist, in "A Featherbed for Critics," without showing any more concern for education than an eighteenth-century English parson had for theology. A "featherbed" is a good berth, then, a sinecure. The world owes the writer a living; no question is made of the social responsibilities, or even the technical qualifications, of the writer.

"The cost of criticism is the expense of greatness," Mr. Blackmur concludes. Just previously, apropos of Henry Adams, he has stated that "failure is the expense of greatness." If he will pardon the application of logic to his statements, we can derive from them a meaningful inference: the cost of criticism is failure. This will not distress Mr. Blackmur, for his implicit premise is a conception of splendid failure that finally becomes explicit in his cult of Adams. The source of this attitude is a high-minded recoil from the stuffed-shirt professionalism of literary success; but that only encourages Mr. Blackmur—as it encouraged Messrs. Miller and Fraenkel—to dramatize their predicament with a certain bohemian amateurishness. In the end, they join forces in an intellectualism to end all intellectuality. The artist is supposed to make a pageant of his shattered sensibilities, and the critic's job is to pick up the pieces —*disjecti membra poetae*. The goal of the amateur is still the role of Hamlet, and Mr. Blackmur is happy to concur with Eliot that Shakespeare's "Hamlet" was a "profound failure."

HARRY LEVIN

Portrait of Dylan Thomas

Portrait of the Artist As a Young Dog, by Dylan Thomas. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions. 186 pages. $2.50.

THERE IS NOT a great deal to say of this book except that it is very good. If Thomas' verse is generally baffling in its obscurity, his stories—these stories at any rate—discourage comment by their very transparency. They are said by the publisher to form a kind of autobiography of the young Welsh poet; and we see Thomas as a boy in Wales paying summer visits to country relatives, experiencing fits of religious and literary fever, growing up and discovering Nighttown, love, and the frustration of love. What gives the narratives distinction is the beautiful easy writing, for the Welsh setting is rudimentary, the situations are conventional. And no doubt they are meant to be: in telling his own story, Thomas evidently wants also to recapitulate the classic themes of youthful experience.

But there is missing in him an important element of the adolescent pattern: the sense of agony or malaise or whatever it may be named. All such emotions are here transfigured by the writer's elemental detachment and geniality. ("The force that through the green fuse drives the flower/ Drives my green age.") As we know from his poetry, Thomas is indifferent to problems and programs. Engrossed in the magical Freudian sub-machinery of life, he represents a demonic one-man insurrection against the human, as it is commonly defined and experienced. And for the poetry of concepts he substitutes a poetry of abstract textures and complex erotic allusions, which is extraordinary, if also monotonous, in its energetic mindless music. The style of the present book, like its observation of provincial Britain, owes something to James Joyce. The punning title indicates, however, Thomas' deliberate and cheerful divergence from Joyce's humanity.

F. W. DUPEE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

European History: Books of the Year

FEW BOOKS in any language rival the masterly and extremely readable historical survey of mid-eighteenth-century Europe which Walter L. Dorn presents in his "Competition for Empire, 1740-1763," a period marked by two major wars (Harpers, $3.75). This fresh contribution to the Langer Rise of Modern Europe series discusses the role and interplay of dominant factors in European history—the balance-of-power system, the administrative, social and military structure of the Leviathan state, continental and worldwide capitalist and imperialist rivalries, and the Enlightenment. As in the other volumes of the Langer series, the focus is continental, not national. Such a focus is of inestimable value to the reader, for it enables him to see in bold relief the larger forces common to the whole of Europe.

Given the bewildering variety of his subject matter, Dorn has accomplished a remarkable feat in maintaining a high standard of interpretative scholarship and literary skill. Unlike glib devotees of a newer history, he does not merely say that certain historical factors are interrelated, but he actually demonstrates their interrelations by considering politics, militarism and culture, for example, in the light of their social foundations. War and militarism, the bugbears of many historians, are represented as constituent elements of European civilization, a fact only too apparent today. Indeed there is much in the contemporary scene which Dorn illumines: no one will miss the relevance to Nazism of a striking passage on page 62 with reference to the regimented and Spartan life of the eighteenth-century Prussian, whose only freedom was the freedom to obey. It is impossible, within brief space, to do more than point to such admirable features of Dorn's work as the synthesis of the Age of Reason, the disentangling of the diplomatic and military phases of the Seven Years' War and the portraits of Frederick the Great, Pitt the elder, Kaunitz and the Duke of Choiseul.

Perhaps at no time in the modern era have the principles of constitutionalism, free government and individual rights been subjected to a more determined and widespread attack than during the past twenty-five years. The factors contributing to this attack are too complex and numerous to note here. Mention should be made, however, of the amazing and growing indifference to those principles among conservatives, idealists in a hurry and men of good will. Obvious, therefore, is the timeliness of a few books on some historical and institutional aspects of the struggle against arbitrary government.

Charles H. McIlwain, one of the foremost living historians and expounders of the force of law against the force of despotic will, examines with his customary erudition, insight and lucidity the forms and historical interrelations of certain salient characteristics of "Constitutionalism, Ancient and Modern" (Cornell, $2.50). Never losing sight of the contemporary conflict between constitutionalism and despotism, however benevolent, the Harvard scholar goes back to the Greeks and the Romans, particularly the latter, in tracing the successive stages of the long, desperate and heroic struggle for constitutional limitations on government. Contrary to the Germanist vogue in England and in this country, McIlwain justly emphasizes the Roman rather than the Germanic influence on the origins and development of constitutional concepts. Then, in reaffirming the significance of medieval constitutionalism, he explains the full import of Bracton's distinction between *jurisdictio* (law) and *gubernaculum* (government). When, finally, McIlwain takes up the more modern sanctions of government by law, he devotes his chief attention to England, the most constitutional of European nations, incidentally and commendably rejecting all the nonsense about the mysterious quality of English race, character and blood, or the Englishman's Germanic strain. Throughout his work, which is a profound outline rather than an exhaustive treatise, McIlwain reveals a freshness of approach and an historical sense which are none too common among constitutional scholars. Also characteristic is a candid and acute presentation of his "heretical" views on thinkers and movements. For instance, he rescues Plato from the totalitarians, pays serious attention to Thomas Paine, and condemns the system of checks and balances.

Intimately associated, though not necessarily synonymous, with the history of freedom is the history of parliamentary government. Ivor Jennings adds to his celebrated work on the modern British Cabinet an excellent description and analysis of the modern British "Parliament" (Macmillan, $6), one of the most distinguished pieces of writing on British politics since Bagehot. In a clear and lively exposition of Parliament's traditions, "atmosphere," rules, practices and adaptability to changing social and economic conditions, the author parts company with the formalistic school of writers on political institutions. He fully realizes the extent to which the most successful characteristics of Parliament are, to use the words of Sir Henry Maine, "secreted in the interstices of procedure," but he subordinates all the necessary procedural detail to broader considerations of the democratic political philosophy underlying the British system.

J. A. Thomas' discerning study of the economic and functional character of "The House of Commons, 1832-1901" (Oxford, $2.50) breaks new ground and remedies a deficiency in the literature on the British Parliament by establishing the great importance of property interests in the structure and working of the Commons. The usual assumption that the House is built upon geographical areas receives a corrective which has long been overdue, and Thomas' criteria should be borne in mind by future writers on representative government.

Despite the disasters that have befallen France at various times, no country on the continent of Europe has displayed such a long and remarkable continuity in its historical development. Familiar as it is in its general outlines, there is a surprising paucity of notable comprehensive works on its more modern phases. Particularly welcome, therefore, are two books, one by a French, the other by a British author, which, taken together, cover the history of France from 1852 to the present time. In "The Second Empire" (Lippincott, $5), Octave Aubry applies his well known talents as an imaginative writer to excellent purpose,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

giving us a vivid and, on the whole, balanced narrative of the years from 1852, when Louis Napoleon became Emperor of the French, to 1870, when France was humiliated by Prussia. Aubry makes intelligible a complicated period in French and European history and furnishes the most satisfactory general one-volume treatment of it in English, even though, on many matters, he will not receive full faith and credit from scholars and even though he fails to mention, in his uncritical bibliography, the important work of Simpson on Louis Napoleon, of Thayer on Cavour and of Robert H. Lord on the origins of the Franco-Prussian war. The book abounds in details on the personal, the episodic, the anecdotal, and describes at length the court of Napoleon the Third and Eugénie, with its vulgar splendor and pedestrian taste. At the same time it has good perspective with regard to the more basic elements in the inner history of the adventurous attempt to combine noble enthusiasms with *Realpolitik*, to achieve military glory and social reform and to establish democracy without liberty. Aubry's attitude toward Napoleon III, though sympathetic, is much more severe than one might have expected from his earlier volumes.

An historical writer of the first rank appears this year in the person of D. W. Brogan, successor to Ernest Barker as professor of political science at Cambridge University, author of the finest work on American politics by a foreigner since Bryce's American Commonwealth, and one of the keenest foreign observers of French developments since J. E. C. Bodley. The vicissitudes of modern France from the fall of the Second Empire to the outbreak of the present war form the theme of his superb book on "France under the Republic" (Harpers, $5). Although certain judgments and statements of fact are questionable, no single volume provides a more comprehensive, readable and authoritative presentation of the major movements and personalities in recent French history. Besides fulfilling all the possible demands of the general public, for whom it is primarily intended, it offers suggestive viewpoints to scholars, none of whom can afford to ignore it, and it will probably prove more illuminating on the background of the French collapse than most of the recent books by presumably superior commentators. In the marshaling of events and in the depicting of characters, Brogan exhibits historical grasp, narrative skill, sense of proportion, wit and sensibility of a rare order. There is scarcely an important personage, movement or incident that does not come to life in his seven hundred pages. The portraits of political leaders who are little more than textbook names to most readers, are unusually penetrating. Since Brogan is not overwhelmed by holy awe for his subject, he sees the comic and light as well as the tragic and serious. It is a sad commentary on our critical standards that a book which promises to be an historical and literary classic has received such slight attention.

Since the World War, America has become one of the great centers for the scholarly study of Russian history, as is evidenced by the publication this year of two able works on religious and political developments in pre-revolutionary Russia. "Church and State in Russia" (Columbia, $4), by John S. Curtiss, is an authoritative account—probably the most authoritative—of the twilight of the Russian Church during the years 1900-17. Curtiss is not so much interested in doctrinal questions as he is in the intimate political, economic and social relations between Church and State and in the role of orthodoxy as a handmaid of autocracy. One will come from his dispassionate book with thoughts of unholy rather than of holy Russia and with a better understanding of why the Russian church shared the fate of the Tsarist regime.

Alfred Levin's "The Second Duma" (Yale, $3) deals principally with the activities of the Social Democrats, both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, and their use of the short-lived Duma, from February to June, 1907, as a platform for revolutionary propaganda. His exhaustive analysis of parliamentary deliberations on major issues throws much valuable light on the state of Russia and on the policies of the Russian leftist parties in the period following the 1905 revolution. Students of Bolshevik theory will find, upon reading his volume, that the Bolshevik attitude toward parliamentary methods was more a matter of tactics than of principle.

During the past few years, the place of Morocco in world affairs before 1914 has received much attention from American scholars. Cruickshank has described the interest of great powers in "native protection" up to 1885, Williamson has examined the relations of Germany and Morocco before 1905, and Anderson has analyzed the first Moroccan crisis, 1904-06. This year another American, Ima C. Barlow, presents, in "The Agadir Crisis" (North Carolina, $4), a scholarly and what is probably the first intensive study of the stormy 1911 Moroccan prelude to the First World War, centering her attention on the rivalry between France and Germany.

Frederick J. Teggart, who is perhaps the leading American exponent of the thesis that history is a science, attempts to put his thesis to a test in a challenging book on correlations in historical events entitled "Rome and China" (California, $3). Discarding several widespread explanations of the barbarian invasions, he offers a minute, learned and bold analysis of the correspondence of occurrences in Europe and Asia from 58 B.C. to 107 A.D. During this period, we are told, recurrent barbarian uprisings in Europe were invariably preceded by the outbreak of war either on the eastern frontiers of the Roman Empire or in the "Western Regions" of the Chinese. Thus Teggart raises the thorny problem of causation; but while his case for the chronological sequence and correlation of events is impressive, his argument on the causal relations among these events is by no means convincing. Chronological sequence does not spell causation. We need not accept Teggart's ideas on causation in order to recognize that he has enriched our knowledge of the barbarian invasions. By taking an intercontinental instead of a narrow Roman imperial view and by emphasizing the significance of trade routes, he has enlarged the scope of fruitful historical inquiry, and this criterion should prove helpful to those who are inclined to see the history of certain localized areas *in vacuo*.

The barbarian invasions of Rome are numerically insignificant when compared to the European migration to this country—the greatest movement of population in the history of mankind. In "The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860" (Harvard, $3.50), the late Marcus Lee Hansen has made a significant contribution to the history of the continuing settlement of the United States in terms of its European

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

background. Why Europeans, principally northern Europeans, came here, not what they did after they got here, is the theme. Hansen is concerned chiefly with nineteenth-century social and economic factors and is at his best in describing the effect of changes in European rural economy on European emigration. Most readers will be surprised to learn that the United States was not always the common man's Utopia and that, at a time when this country was in disfavor with prospective continental emigrants, they went to Russia and South America.

Turning from the migration of peoples to the migration of ideas, we should note the work of Richard H. Heindel, who has brought together a wealth of information on various social, economic and cultural aspects of "The American Impact on Great Britain, 1898-1914" (Pennsylvania, $4). The book shows that America's impact on Britain was far more considerable than has generally been supposed; that there was much talk about an Anglo-American alliance and Anglo-Saxon "racialism," though surprisingly little about a brotherhood of democracies; and that, during the early years of this century, Britons were more troubled by the American than by the German economic peril. Unfortunately, the volume leaves much to be desired in organization and style; but, fortunately, the author is no sentimentalist and displays no partisan leanings in the selection of material.

Exclusive of biographies, collections of materials, reference books and texts, a considerable number of important historical works has appeared this year. All of them cannot be evaluated or even noticed here because of limited space and because they have been or will be considered separately in this journal. There is room to mention some noteworthy books on a variety of subjects. Papers concerning the methods of history and other social studies, which were read at the 1939 meeting of the American Historical Association, are included in "The Cultural Approach to History," edited by Caroline Ware (Columbia, $3.50). "An Essay on Metaphysics," by R. G. Collingwood, is a penetrating treatment of that subject as a branch of history (Oxford, $6). H. A. L. Fisher's "Pages from the Past" embody his urbane point of view on many historical and political problems (Oxford, $3.50). Kenneth Scott Latourette, author of an extensive study of the expansion of Christianity, presents, in "Anno Domini: Jesus, History and God," the factual results of much of his research and also his philosophy of history emphasizing the abiding influence of Christ (Harpers, $2.50).

Michael Prawdin is the author of an outstanding book on "The Mongol Empire" (Macmillan, $5), and on the same subject Harold Lamb has written a vivid account entitled "The March of the Barbarians" (Doubleday, Doran, $3.75). Political and moral ideas underlying "The Spanish Theory of Empire in the Sixteenth Century" are discussed by J. H. Parry (Macmillan, $1.25).

"The Social Ideas of [English] Religious Leaders, 1660-1688" are analyzed by Richard B. Schlatter (Oxford, $3.50). An important aspect of eighteenth-century history is treated in Marion Spector's "The American Department of the British Government, 1768-1782" (Columbia, $2.25). Hoffman Nickerson has written a timely book on "The Armed Horde, 1793-1939: An Historical Study of the Mass Army" (Putnam's, $3.50).

G. F.-H. and J. Berkeley have completed the third and final volume of their ambitious and, in certain respects, somewhat amateurish, account of "Italy in the Making," 1815-48 (Macmillan, $6). Anglo-Italian intellectual relations are the subject of Harry W. Rudman's "Italian Nationalism and English Letters: Figures of the Risorgimento and Victorian Men of Letters" (Columbia, $3.25). Bruce T. McCully investigates "English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism" (Columbia, $4.50). Arthur J. Marder's scholarly and brilliant book on "The Anatomy of British Sea Power" concerns the important period 1880-1905 (Knopf, $5).

James T. Shotwell and Francis Deak have written an admirable short history of "Turkey at the Straits" (Macmillan, $2). Nicholas Kaltchas is the author of an "Introduction to the Constitutional History of Modern Greece" (Columbia, $2). Count Carlo Sforza gives particular attention to the Yugoslavs in "Fifty Years of War and Diplomacy in the Balkans" (Columbia, $2.75), and Theodore I. Geshkoff, a Bulgarian, describes efforts toward "Balkan Union" (Columbia, $3).

Leo Grebler deals with Germany and Wilhelm Winkler with Austria-Hungary in a study of "The Cost of the World War to Germany and Austria-Hungary" (Yale, $2.50), a volume in the monumental "Economic and Social History of the World War," published under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment. "Reparation at the Paris Peace Conference, from the Standpoint of the American Delegation" is examined by Philip M. Burnett (2 vols., Columbia, $15). A leading authority on international plebiscites, Sarah Wambaugh, has written an invaluable account of "The Saar Plebiscite" (Harvard, $5).

From what has been said, it is clear that, despite the war, this has been a very good year in the field of history.

GAUDENS MEGARO

Contributors

D. H. PALMER is an engineer and physicist, co-author of the book, "Millions on Wheels."

GEORGE BRITT is a New York newspaperman, co-author, with Heywood Broun, of "For Christians Only."

STEPHEN CARTER is the pseudonym of a Washington newspaperman.

JONATHAN MITCHELL, who lives in Washington, is well known for his articles on the political scene.

MAX LERNER is professor of Political Science at Williams College and author of two books, "It Is Later Than You Think" and "Ideas Are Weapons."

MAX GISSEN left a Vermont law office five years ago to become a free-lance writer and editor. He was formerly editor of Teachers' Guide.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES is a poet and critic, who recently published through Norton a translation of Garcia Lorca's poems.

HARRY LEVIN teaches English and Comparative Literature at Harvard. He has edited the Selected Works of Ben Jonson and has been a contributor to The Criterion, The Atlantic Monthly and The Southern Review.

F. W. DUPEE is an editor of Partisan Review and a contributor of critical articles to other magazines.

GAUDENS MEGARO is the author of "Mussolini in the Making" and other works on Italian and English history. He teaches at Queens College, New York City.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE UNITED STATES is confronted by the most serious crisis in its whole history. Upon the speed with which we face up to our gigantic tasks depends the fate of freedom throughout the world. During 1941, The New Republic pledges itself to tell the story of the American armament effort fully and frankly, not merely in terms of what the country is doing, but in terms of what it must do. It pledges itself to discuss and define this country's needs and hopes in the reorganization that must grow out of this irreconcilable conflict between democracy and Nazism.

GRAFTON HUX

Samuel GRAFTON

Mr. Grafton's new book, *ALL OUT*, has made a sensational success. Louis Adamic calls the author "probably the most important journalist now writing" and says his book "should be read by every American at this time." Ernest Lindley says "more unadulterated truth in this book than in any other I have read since the downfall of the continental democracies compelled us to reëxamine our own situation."

Julian HUXLEY

The editors believe that the plans already under way guarantee that 1941 will be the year in which The New Republic most completely fulfills its mission as a challenging, critical journal which reports every phase of our swiftly moving civilization.

From London we shall receive regular reports by H. N. Brailsford, long our British correspondent, by Mr. Huxley, Kingsley Martin, editor of The New Statesman, and others.

From Washington the all-important scene in the nation's capital will be recorded by our own mysterious "T. R. B.," by Nathan Robertson, Jonathan Mitchell, Frank Hanighen and others.

From All Over the Country New Republic correspondents will describe the happenings in These United States.

And in the Home Office familiar New Republ writers will continue the high standards set in th past. Malcolm Cowley will contribute the leadir book review each week, with additional reviews b Edmund Wilson, Max Lerner, Van Wyck Brook Otis Ferguson, Harold Ward and others. Sta Young will deal with drama, as heretofore. Ot Ferguson will write of the movies and Stanl Ferguson of phonograph records. George Soul Bruce Bliven and others will write on national a international political and economic questions.

The series, "The Next Four Years," will give authoritative look into the future by outstandi experts, many of them high officials of the gover ment.

The policy of special supplements, of which t

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED